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**FRANKENSTEIN  
IN THE LOST WORLD**

by  
Donald F. Glut



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**Tome #6**



# **FRANKENSTEIN IN THE LOST WORLD**



**created and written by Donald F. Glut**

*"Spine"-tingling art by Rick "Spine" Mountfort*

**Druktenis Publishing**

**348 Jocelyn Pl. Highwood, IL 60040**

# **CASTLE OF FRANKENSTEIN™** Presents **The New Adventures of FRANKENSTEIN™**

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**READ AND COLLECT THEM ALL!**

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## FRANKENSTEIN FOCUS

**A**t last the long-awaited Tome #6 is ready to enter your world. You may have thought we got lost on our way to publishing the latest **NEW ADVENTURES OF FRANKENSTEIN**. The scheduling and spreading out of all our publications to come out at least a month apart or a little more took longer than expected. I apologize to the select scary and smart few of you who are enjoying and awaiting each new Tome. Tome #7, **FRANKENSTEIN IN THE MUMMY'S TOMB** is being worked on right now and will see print by the end of the summer if not a little before.

For those of you picking up these pulp pages for the first time and reading this focus let me say it's not too late to enjoy, **READ AND COLLECT THEM ALL!** The first five tomes are still available but in limited supply. If you like the Frankenstein Monster and old monster movies all these stories are not to be missed.

I realize now that many people have the time to read these days especially a feature-length novel but if you set aside say 10 or 15 minutes a day to begin reading one of our tomes you won't regret it. Up to a year or so ago I hadn't read a novel in years but suddenly found the extra few minutes here and there to really read again.

The time is here now to read **FRANKENSTEIN IN THE LOST WORLD** Tome #6. How did the Frankenstein Monster end up in a lost world? How did the Frankenstein Monster survive the Werewolf in Tome #5? **READ ON!**

-Dennis J. Druktenis

## Letters of FRANKENSTEIN

Wow! We have **CASTLE OF FRANKENSTEIN PRESENTS THE NEW ADVENTURES OF FRANKENSTEIN #5** in our hands and we must say, we love your publication! We have always been a great fan of the Frankenstein Monster and always felt that Boris Karloff was the best actor to portray Mary Shelley's creation. We have always fantasized on what if the classic monsters like Frankenstein, Dracula, Werewolf and Mummy crossed over in a movie and who would win in a battle royal? Maybe perhaps we will see a fantasy crossover like this published in your magazine?

Highly enjoyed Donald F. Glut's **FRANKENSTEIN VS. THE WEREWOLF**. Thank you for reproducing the Gothic Collection—**THE MONSTER OF FRANKENSTEIN** comic book cover along with the reproduction of the comic book pages. Tonight we'll be clearing off the coffee tables of magazines like Scientific American, The Saturday Evening Post, G-Fan, American Scientist, Popular Mechanics and Reader's Digest and laying out copies of your publication for our guests!

**THE NEW ADVENTURES OF FRANKENSTEIN** absolutely rules!

Sincerely yours,  
**JASON PORTER and KRISTEN SUNDERLAND** Elk Grove, CA

Just received Tome #4: **MEETS DRACULA**. I have been a long time fan of Glut and I do remember his early Frankenstein story in **FAMOUS MONSTERS** in the early 70's. The idea of continuing some great Gothic adventures has long been fascinating to fans. Though, many writers have written terrible stinkers on the subject Glut has never failed us. I am still trying to find his early hooks on Frankenstein and other horrors.

The Dick Brierley Frankenstein horror comics series was a mythic wonder that

I now enjoy. I sometimes read the Brierley comics first. I had only read about Brierley's comics in Overstreet's Comic Book Price Guide before you began reprinting them. Do you have the comic covers on file? I've only glimpsed them in Overstreet. I do wonder what Brierley could have done with his funny version in Marvel's Aargh series.

E. PARK Holdenville, OK

**SEND** in your Letters of **FRANKENSTEIN** to:  
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*This Frankenstein Feature-Length Novel* has never been published in English in any form until now!

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Awaits you on the next pulp page!

# "FRANKENSTEIN IN THE LOST WORLD"

by Donald F. Glut

*"Spine"-tingling art by Rick "Spine" Mountfort  
 A Frankenstein Feature-Length Novel!*

## CHAPTER ONE

A sizable crowd of curiosity-seekers had already gathered around the quicksand-filled stream that, like the most of some medieval castle, almost surrounded the once-stately old chateau. The building was indeed an eyesore, in my opinion, embraced by a dense tangle of clinging vines. Yet the structure seemed hardly out of place here where it had stood (for how long, I could not even guess) amid the foggy moors of Brighton, England.

It was already mid-morning, and the dredging equipment – heavy machinery resembling mechanical dinosaurs – and the workmen I had paid for in advance had been noisily dragging that filthy miasma for almost two hours. There was no way to even estimate the depth of that winding pool of muck and slime. I wondered how many secrets the workers might uncover in that mess before finding what I had employed them to retrieve.

Truly I wished that the onlookers had not come out to witness this operation, at least in such numbers. By now there were several dozen of them, men and women alike, watching as the workers continued to dredge the quicksand pool. But I could not really blame them all for showing up here to witness the activity. News that an American scientist was attempting to withdraw the ugly carcass of the Frankenstein Monster from a "moat" of British quicksand could hardly be hushed up.

Not just the possibility of viewing the actual Frankenstein Monster, but also my very presence on these moors had attracted much local attention. The mere fact that I had come to this gloomy region had aroused the people of Brighton to whisper and gossip. By now the once respected name of Dr. Burt

Winslow had already achieved worldwide notoriety. Ever since that fateful day, when I discovered the frozen yet still-alive body of Frankenstein's Monster preserved for over two centuries in Arctic ice, I have found myself to be somewhat of a celebrity. And with that celebrity came a new set of myths associated with my name. Indeed, among some people I had come to be regarded as a mad scientist as insane as Victor Frankenstein himself or as a fiend rivaling the Monster in its evil.

As the workmen continued to plow through the muck, I saw a group of protestors carrying picket signs gather at the site – this being a familiar and ubiquitous sight I had learned to live with ever since my days back at Castle Frankenstein in Ingolstadt, Germany.

Lynn Powell, my fiancée and invaluable assistant in my work, nudged up against me. Turning, I saw the frown appear on her lovely face as her long blonde hair rustled in the morning breeze. I felt her arm gently encircle my waist, then press harder against me.

"No matter where we go," she said to me, gazing out toward the people with the placards, "they show up. Some of them almost look familiar, even. I'm almost starting to believe that these are the same people we first met in Ingolstadt, who keep following us around..."

"Like 'groupies'?" I said, smiling at her.

"More like 'anti-groupies,'" Lynn returned.

Silently, I read the messages on some of the picket signs:

"WE'VE HAD ENOUGH HORROR, YANK!"

"BURT WINSLOW – GET OFF OUR SOIL!"

"WE DON'T WANT WINSLOW OR HIS MONSTER!" In a way I could not blame their protests. In the eyes of these people I was a foreign intruder, perhaps the most ugly of Americans, even the reincarnation of Victor Frankenstein himself, that Eighteenth Century genius who created the Monster I was now so enthusiastically trying to collect.

"In a way it's like we've been stuck in a rerun of a motion picture," I mused, speaking so that only Lynn could hear me. "At least they spelled my name correctly."

"They make me so angry," she said, her voice becoming stern.

"Ignore them," I told her.

Lynn waited a few seconds, then smiled. But I doubted the sincerity of that smile. The young woman had had so many bizarre experiences recently, endured virtually impossible adventures and suffered unbelievable horrors. I knew that, more than anything on this Earth, what she wanted most was a *finis* to everything and anything associated with Frankenstein or his creation.

"Are you certain the Monster is down there?" Lynn asked. I saw her lovely blue eyes shift from me to the dredging equipment working through the mud and other matter. "We've been out here for quite a while now. And so far, nothing."

For a few moments I recalled the near-hysterical voice on the telephone that summoned me the previous afternoon at our London apartment. The voice was that of a young woman, a woman whose sanity I questioned based upon the tone of her voice and suggested paranoia of her words. The young woman was afraid for her life, fearing that some kind of nocturnal demon was watching her from the shadows, ready to spring and prey upon her. I put no stock in her imaginings. Yet it was what *else* she told me that sparked my interest. The woman stated that her father, a scientist, had recently found and revived the Frankenstein Monster, and that the giant had met its demise within the very expanse of quicksand at which Lynn and I were now looking. Then she told me that, upon reading an interview with me in a local newspaper and learning of my own association with the Monster, she rang me up on the telephone.

To ensure that hers was not a crank call, I asked her to describe in detail the Monster's



appearance. She did so admirably and I believed her. Moreover, I could not afford to pass up any leads – even those that might turn out to be false – in tracking down the beast's whereabouts.

The last time I had personally seen the Frankenstein Monster it was being buried beneath a collapsing building not far from this very chateau. Upon returning later to those ruins to claim the creature's body for the sole purpose of destroying it, I found no sign of it. Either the Monster had survived and escaped somewhere, or someone else – the young woman's father, as she claimed? – had found it. Whatever the explanation, there had been no news of the giant for a while now, and then suddenly I received that enigmatic phone call.

The woman never identified herself, although I would soon learn that the former occupants of this chateau was an eccentric scientist named Dr. Dom and his sheltered daughter Vanessa; nor did I hear from her again. But judging from the very special electrical equipment I would subsequently discover in the laboratory inside the chateau – just the kind required to re-energize the Monster – I had no reason to doubt what she had told me.

And now that I was standing on this spot, looking at that stagnant brown mass that had settled about the castle, I *know* – call it a kind of "sixth sense," perhaps – that the thing was down there.

My hired workers had not yet found their quarry. Nevertheless, I was ready. Although I did not think the Monster would be conscious once they brought his body up, I had to be prepared. In the breast pocket of my sport coat was the syringe I had brought along from London, containing enough potent tranquilizer to put a rhinoceros to sleep for at least a few hours. I had no doubts that the drug would also work on the Monster, preventing him from regaining consciousness.

Always in my mind was the knowledge that Victor Frankenstein had, perhaps inadvertently, bestowed upon his creation the gift (or curse) of immortality. Thus, the Frankenstein Monster could not simply die or be killed in the conventional sense. Actual physical destruction constituted the only certain "death" for this living horror that had been assembled from the parts of myriad corpses. I knew that, even though the Monster was for a while now buried beneath this quicksand, it was still alive – albeit, perhaps in a state of suspended animation – its maker's immortal spark of life still coursing through its various systems. And maybe, even

though the creature's limbs were not moving, it was still waiting, thoughts of ghostly revenge against mankind yet festering in the being's transplanted brain.

While the protestors continued to do their best to annoy my beautiful companion and me, two men, apparently not members of that group, gingerly approached us. From the subtle smiles on their faces I suspected that they were not about to warn me to pack up my "mad doctor" things and high-tail it back to the United States.

Even at this distance I could see that the taller and older of the two men had a pleasant smile and a small mustache. There was something familiar about his face that I could not pinpoint. In one of his hands was a small, hardback book. The other man was not as tall, although he was not what would be considered short. Holding a small digital camera, his complexion was slightly dark and he may have been of Latin descent.

I returned my attention to my crew, waving at the foreman.

"Nothing yet, Doc!" the foreman shouted to me over the sounds of heavy equipment in operation.

"Keep searching then!" I hollered back at him. "Until you find it!"

I heard some of the onlookers voice their complaints, some of them stating that they hoped that nothing would be found in that quicksand.

"And don't worry!" I continued. "Once you do find it, I'll be standing by with the tranquilizer, in case it's needed!"

In that moment, the taller of the men gave an admiring look to Lynn.

She smiled back at him.

Then, as if recognizing my face, the taller man turned toward me, extending his hand and gave me a firm and friendly shake.

"Good morning," he said to me in a distinctly American accent. He handed me a business card, then the book, the author's name the same as that on the card. "My friend and I are writers. This is one of my latest."

The book was nonfiction, a history of science fiction, horror and fantasy in German silent movies. I nodded approvingly and started to give it back.

"It's a gift," he said, "to a fellow American – and a man whose recent career we've been following quite closely. Dr. Winslow."

"Thank you," I said somewhat skeptically, while stuffing the book into a pocket.

To be honest, I never had much interest in those kinds of movies, silent or otherwise. Science always held far more of the fantastic than even the most state-of-the-art special-effects scenes in the best of those motion pictures. And in recent months, my real-life experiences with Frankenstein's Monster made me even less inclined to find interest in bizarre creatures and situations out of fiction.

"And this is a friend of mine from Spain," the taller man said, as the other one handed me his card and then clasped my hand. "He is his country's most respected scholar of fantastic films."

The Spaniard smiled warmly.

"You're right," I said. "I'm Bert Winslow. And this..." I nodded toward the woman standing beside me, "is my assistant, Ms. Powell."

"Actually, I'm much more than that," Lynn responded. "Bert and I are going to be married soon."

"I suppose we would have done that a while ago, if this Monster business hadn't got in the way."

She squeezed my hand. "This time I'm not letting anything stand in our way," she said, chuckling quietly. "It's time Bert stopped dwelling on such morbid things as monsters and finally settled down."

A warm rush spread across my cheeks. It was time to change the subject. "So, what brings the two of you all the way from your respective countries – and out to this dismal territory?"

"You'd be surprised how long the two of us have been following your trail, Dr. Winslow," said the darker man with a pronounced Spanish accent.

"For more than a year now we have been collaborating on a book about the Frankenstein theme in literature, the movies and other media," said the other man. "And writing about the many actors who have played the Frankenstein Monster over the years – Charles Ogle, Boris Karloff of course, Bela Lugosi, Glenn Strange, Christopher Lee, and countless others. Even, more recently, Robert DeNiro. So you might imagine the sensation you caused – especially for us – when the news hit the media that you'd discovered the real McCoy, so to speak."

"To some of us, you are a real hero, Señor Winslow."

Frowning, I returned, "I'm no hero, not in this area or anywhere. To those people," I went on, nodding toward the protestors, "I'm an outright villain."

The taller man smiled broadly. "I can see that," he said, taking a small cassette recorder from under his sport jacket. "But my *amigo* and I have both come long distances to be here. He's brought a camera and I'm anxious to start recording my notes. I promise we won't get in your way. We'd just like to get some material for our book. Do we have your permission?"

"Well..." I began, looking up at the sky and that bright morning sun, "at least you won't have to use a flash."

"Don't worry about that," said the taller man. "We don't plan to create a *King Kong* type situation here."

I laughed. "You're right. That's the last thing I'd want to happen during my 'reunion' with the Monster. But please, be careful. And don't interfere what I'm going to do once that net comes up with its ugly prize."

"And that is --?" asked the man from Spain.

I produced the syringe, letting its silvery needle glint in the sun's light. "Conscious or comatose, I'm going to jab the beast with this. Just call it insurance."

"And then, *Sektor Winslow*?"

"Then, after the creature is sufficiently dragged and incapable of causing any trouble, I'm going to fly it back to Castle Frankenstein in Ingolstadt. Once securely back in the laboratory, I will then destroy the Monster in the only way that can be certain -- dissection, taking it apart piece by piece, and then disposing forever of its component parts."

I looked around, again noting the band of protesters.

"No doubt, once back at the castle," said Lynn, her lips pouting. "But will be pestered by more of the town's residents. But at least he'll be rid of these."

The tall man nodded, his mustache moving as he smiled again.

None of us had the opportunity to say anything else. There was a commotion starting up at the dredging site. Even the people with the picket signs were turning away from me to witness what was happening in the quagmire.

I heard a gruff voice, that of the foreman I had hired, shout with triumph, "By God, we've got it! We've found the bloody Monster!"

My mind raced. Instinctively I thrust out my hand, pressing it against Lynn's stomach. "Lynn, stay back!" Then I rushed forward through the morning mist, the hypodermic needle held in my hand like some deadly

atomic weapon. "Everyone keep back... until I'm certain there's no danger!"

Lynn did as I asked her, although the two writers of the Frankenstein book followed me, keeping close behind me, the Spaniard ready with his camera.

By the time I reached the edge of the quicksand stream, a manlike form clothed entirely in black was already being hoisted out by the heavy equipment I had hired out. Mist snaked and swirled about the gigantic thing, almost tauntingly. The creature was entirely trapped within the sturdy, web-like net, supported from above by a strong winch.

My eyes squinted as I beheld the thing.

Although it was covered with layers of muck, there was no disguising those familiar features -- the corpse-like, yellow skin; the long black hair hanging in coarse bangs over that high forehead; the horizontal gash, crudely stitched and clamped shut, running horizontally across the brow; the metal electrodes, one protruding from each temple; the stitched and long-healed wounds running down the right cheek and around the neck; those enormous hands transplanted to the wrists.

This was Frankenstein's Monster; of that there could be no doubt.

"Hurry!" I ordered the workmen "Swing it slowly in my direction. But be careful. The least jarring motion might revive the thing."

"Looks dead to me, gov'," said the foreman, "but then it's you and not me who's the expert." Then he proceeded to give the appropriate instructions to his men.

Slowly the crane swung its monstrous treasure away from the quicksand, suspending the Monster some five feet above the ground, just a few yards away from me. So far there was no discernible movement in the thing held trapped inside the net, no breathing or any other sign of life. And yet, in my mind and heart, I knew that the Monster was still alive, just as he was in that block of ice for more than two hundred years.

I held up the syringe, dramatically, as if to let everyone know that I was in charge of this situation and had everything under control.

I heard various complaints murmuring from the crowd of onlookers, heard the familiar voices of the two authors as they marveled at what they were beholding, and heard Lynn Powell quietly tell me to be careful. Someone, in a sotto voice, expressed disbelief that the motionless thing in the net still lived, although I knew better.

Breathing deeply the morning air, I stepped closer to the netted Frankenstein Monster. The closer I approached, the hatred I bore for the creature increased, stazing through my brain. In those moments I thought about all of the lives that had been savagely snuffed away by those enormous, black-nailed hands. And since I had brought this patchwork horror back into this world, my soul bore the guilt of all its crimes.

In that instant I wished that my syringe were indeed an atomic weapon.

It was as I raised the needle and looked for a suitable place to thrust it into that yellow flesh, that I detected the first sign -- though minuscule at first -- of life in the giant. One of its hands began to twitch, just slightly at first, only two of those long fingers. I felt my heart start to race, much as it had on that fateful night when I first restored animation to the being.

The injection *had* to be now in that instant!

In horror, I saw the withered black lips of the Monster flutter, revealing a flush of pearly yet uneven teeth. Saw that straight mouth open to an obscene flash, gulping down a draft of morning air. Heard a low moan that, although issuing from the creature's barrel chest, sounded as if emanating from a burial vault. The heavy eyelids slowly opened and the yellow eyes stared out at me from behind the thick strands of the net.

Then the Frankenstein Monster roared!

"But, it's alive!" yelled Lynn behind me, stating the painfully obvious.

From the corner of my eye, I saw both the American and the Spaniard, one talking into the tiny microphone of his recorder, the other furiously taking photographs. He should have brought a video camera, I told myself, for the Monster was no longer a subject for still photography.

No more delay!

By now, that mud-smeared face behind the net was scowling at me. Plainly the Monster recognized me, his old enemy, and the arrogant human who brought it back into a world of hating *Homo sapiens*. Again the beast roared, hideously, the huge hands clenching into threatening fists that were already struggling for freedom.

I rushed the syringe toward the Monster's arm, the needle flashing.

The giant body twisted in the net, spasmodically, moved its arm aside and away from the needle. A mountainous fist lashed out at me, tearing through several lengths of





netting. If not for the fact that the giant had not yet fully regained its strength, and that the Monster wanted me to live and assume its guilt, that blow would have killed me. The impact knocked me hard to the ground, and for several moments all I saw was the mist of the moors swirling about my face.

"Burt—" I heard Lynn exclaim.

"Keep back, I'm all right," I told her, already getting back to my feet. "Remember—it won't kill me."

Visibly the Monster's strength was increasing. In just a few more seconds those powerful hands would be tearing their way through the netting, setting the beast free—

free to stalk and kill those who had come here this day to witness its retrieval from the quagmire. More deaths to weigh upon my conscience.

No! I swore. The Monster would not kill again. Not today or ever!

Baring my teeth, trying my best to avoid those flailing limbs, I pushed forward again, forcing the needle of my syringe into the Monster's stitched arm.

Again the beast's mouth opened, this time not to roar in anger but to howl from the pain of this foreign object impaling his flesh and muscle. I pressed in the tranquilizer, releasing it into the Monster's circulatory

system. For almost a minute, the Monster tried to fight off the effects of the drug, brate strength against chemistry. But as every moment passed, the giant became noticeably weaker, both physically and in spirit. The battle it was waging from the act was indeed a valiant one. Yet even its virtually indestructible body, assembled so long ago from raw materials of the grave and channel house, could not triumph over this minute example of scientific progress.

I stared at the Monster, calming down, as its orbs revolved in their sockets, more and more slowly...

Just as slowly, the mouth opened, producing a terrifying sound, trailing off...

"Waaaaa... Burt... Waaaaa..."

My God! I thought. The fiend has regained its power of speech! And the way it had spoken my name made it sound like the most terrible of curses.

Then, after what seemed like an eternal waiting, the heavy eyelids closed, the mouth shut and all signs of movement fled the Monster's body. The head lowered, the yellow chin falling hard against its chest.

My peripheral vision detected a flash of gold, as Lynn rushed up beside me and grabbed my arm.

"You did it, Burt," she said, holding onto me tensely. "You've subdued him."

Smiling, I nodded to her, then turned to face the two writers and everyone else who were present on this site.

"It's over, everyone," I said. "Now, if you'll kindly leave Ms. Powell and me alone, you can put those picket signs in storage, or at least change the writing on them. We'll be leaving your country tomorrow morning and taking that horror with us. You'll never have to fear it—or us—ever again."

Clutching tightly their placards, while managing to get a last glower at the sleeping creature in the net, the protestors, some of them still grumbling, walked off in the direction of their parked automobiles. The two writers walked around the sleeping giant, one speaking into his microphone, the other continuing to take pictures. Then, smiling graciously and stating their farewells, they also departed.

"Thank you, gentlemen," I said to the workers. "You've been paid already. But you've done such a spectacular job here this morning, I'll have a very nice bonus for you once you've transported that monstrosity to the airport."

The men cheered, and Lynn and I stepped back to watch them continue with

their work.

Truthfully, I could not wait to embark on our flight back to Ingolstadt. The sooner we arrived back in that quaint Bavarian town, with its university and old-style streets, the sooner the world would be rid of the Monster of Frankenstein. For a good fifteen seconds I fantasized seeing the creature's brain and heart and other organs strewn across an operating table, never to function again.

And the sooner this woman that I had loved for so long would be my bride.

Together, Lynn and I gazed up at the sun, our eyes squinting in its brilliance. I felt a cool breeze wisp about my face and watched as trails of mist danced about the stones and mud of the moors. Pulling Lynn closer to me, I kissed her cheek, knowing that somehow she still loved me, even after experiencing so much suffering and horror in these recently passed months.

As I watched the men work, depositing craning over the net containing the comatose giant toward a waiting truck, I knew that soon Lynn and I would finally be alone once again. Just Lynn and myself...

And, for just a short while, the Frankenstein Monster.

## CHAPTER TWO

**W**e wasted no time in taking off late that same afternoon. I had hired out a relatively new Lear Jet Longhorn and a seasoned pilot to fly it. The aircraft was big enough to provide comfortable transportation for both Lynn and myself and also our giant cargo. Moreover, it had the flight capability of getting us to our destination — Germany — without having to refuel. Booking this aircraft cost me a sizable amount of money. Thankfully my own sizable fortune allowed me such luxuries. In truth, however, getting the Frankenstein Monster back to a place where I could properly dispose of it was more of a necessity than merely the eccentric jaunt of a wealthy man.

Soon, upon taking off from a private airfield in London, the four of us were cruising through the sky on an easterly course toward Germany. Soon we would be back in that very town where, so long ago, a scientist named Victor Frankenstein gave life to the manlike thing that he had created. Fortunately the pilot had no qualms about transporting such an unorthodox cargo; if he did, the money I paid him for the job sufficiently suppressed them. Now Lynn and I were together again, dressed casually and sitting across the narrow

aisle from each other in the aft section of a cabin otherwise devoid of human life.

But not empty.

Behind us in the very back of the cabin, drugged, unconscious and chained to the largest seat, was that inhuman mockery of life, the Frankenstein Monster. Rather than hide the creature away with the supplies, I wanted the brute nearby where, in the event of the slightest indication that it might be fighting off the tranquilizer and returning to consciousness, I would be on hand to administer another powerful dosage. The chains binding the giant were the strongest and sturdiest available. These precautions taken, I felt secure that the beast would cause us no problems for the duration of our trip back to Germany. To err on the side of safety, even though the brute was still not moving, I administered to it another shot.

Smiling at my fiancée and leaning back in my chair, I finally had some time to relax and even to reflect upon the relatively recent past. Most heavy upon my mind was a simple question: Why had I devoted so much of my time, energies and personal fortune — my life — to track the Monster down to its icy tomb, then electrically restore it to animation. What forces had driven me to pursue such a mad line of research? Perhaps it was simple boredom or idle curiosity, or maybe it was just the classic result of having too much money and too much free time on my restless hands. The more mundane scientific experiments I had for years performed, and which eventually led to my PhD degrees in electro-chemistry and biology, offered no excitement anymore. I had to find something more challenging, more spectacular, to occupy my time, to take me out of the sterile environments of academia and the country clubs. Fortunately I had inherited enough money and made sufficiently successful investments to pursue and accomplish virtually any goal I had set for myself. Excitement and recognition were things that I craved. Hunting down and then restoring the thing now chained to a seat in this jet plane seemed to satisfy that financial craving, but in a terrible way I could not, at the time, even begin to envision.

Lynn, clad in a white shirt and blue-jean cut-offs, reached across the aisle and clasped my hand. I clasped hers even tighter, although my mind remained focused more on the horror chained up behind us rather than on her beauty or spirit. Occasionally, as our trip continued peacefully, I would look back at the silent bulk bound by those thick metal links, as if to assure myself that the beast was still

there, to make certain those pasty eyelids were not opening. And every so often I would reach into my pocket to feel the syringe that was filled with the tranquilizer I would administer in the event that the Monster began to return to consciousness. At the first sound of rattling chains I would be ready to act!

Periodically I took out our itinerary. The papers upon which I had scrawled our schedule were becoming more ancient looking every time I removed them from my pocket. They were, in fact, beginning to resemble some old document right out of Victor Frankenstein's laboratory.

"If you keep examining those papers like that," said Lynn, "they're eventually going to fall apart. I don't think those creases will survive much longer."

Laughing, I tamed my head and smiled at her, enjoying the beauty in that flawless countenance. For at least a few moments the schedule was meaningless. Leaning across the aisle, I gave the young woman a long and meaningful kiss. How wonderful the world seemed to me, being here with the woman that I loved, and knowing that the Monster I had returned to the world would soon be no more than a piece of history. And as I continued to kiss Lynn, it was difficult to comprehend how there was once a time when I regarded this young goddess more as an assistant than a lover and future wife.

Still, the Monster was a reality, its composite body yet intact and infused with its artificially induced life. Neither Lynn nor any other living being on this Earth would be truly safe until that being created by Frankenstein had been reduced to its component parts. Not until that, my final experiment with the brute, would either of us be able to feel secure.

"I'm a very lucky person," I said, finally sitting back in my seat again. "I should have realized that long ago. But I guess when you're a 'mad scientist' like me you just get too wrapped up in your 'important' work. If I'd concentrated more on my golf game back at the country club, maybe I'd never have got mixed up with all these monsters and crazies, and maybe you'd have changed your name to 'Winslow' a long time ago."

"And maybe that would never happen," she said. "Remember how we met?"

How could I not remember — when my plan to search out the Frankenstein Monster was just germinating — posting an advertisement in the newspaper for a laboratory assistant and, soon afterwards, finding this golden-haired beauty standing

outside my front door?

"But I know what you mean," she mused. "I've been trying to get you to turn away from your rheostats and test tubes myself. It took a while, but it looks like I may have finally succeeded. I only wish we could get married right away, even by the pilot of this plane, instead of having to wait."

I frowned. For a few moments again I almost forgot the plans for a future happiness that Lynn and I were so desperately hoping to achieve. Again the Monster was in my thoughts. "Now, Lynn ..." I started.

Craning my neck, I looked back at the sleeping Frankenstein Monster. Caked remnants of the quicksand still clung to its body. I took solace in the knowledge that the giant would soon be stretched out upon a table in Frankenstein's laboratory, silently awaiting my scalpel and saw.

Still the beast did not stir.

"You know how I feel about this," I went on, again taking Lynn's hand. "You know the guilt I experience every day for the crimes committed by that...that *thing*. Once I've destroyed the Monster, once I'm certain it will never walk again, never again be a threat to human life, then I can start to enjoy a normal life."

"He looks quite harmless now," she said, looking back at the giant, "drugged and chained like that."

"Drugged, yes, at least for now," I replied. "But who can say how long the effects of the tranquilizer will last, before the drug wears off? The Monster's unnatural composition is so unpredictable. It might remain like that, out cold and seemingly harmless, for the duration of our journey. Then again, those eyes could open at any moment and that massive body move. Even I don't know if those chains would hold if the Monster suddenly revived and exerted its strength. That's why I have my syringe filled and ready."

"But when we get back to the castle," she said with emotion, "must it be by dissection? It seems so cruel."

With bitterness I recalled Lynn's past experiences with the brute, aware that she had empathy for that murderous giant. In my mind I pictured the way those unsightly features twisted as the yellow eyes beheld her loveliness. More than once the Monster had saved Lynn from some unspeakable fate. I knew that Lynn, bless her noble heart, tended to recall those relatively few instances — moments wherein the creature seemingly displayed such human traits as kindness —

rather than the heinous acts of the Monster that so dominated and tormented my own memories.

"You know there's no other way," I informed her.

"But the Monster was given a life it never asked for," she said.

"So?"

"The same can be said for everyone in this world."

I shook my head. "Not a valid argument," I said. "We all spring from life. The Monster was created from death. Victor Frankenstein, in his enthusiasm, either ignored or simply didn't realize that what he was making from all those dead body parts was something monstrous. All Frankenstein was concerned about was building a man and making it live. What his creation looked like didn't concern him. When that being finally did open its eyes and Frankenstein finally recognized it for what it was, a Monster, he ran from it...refused to accept responsibility for it, as a parent would accept his child. That was the origin of the Monster's hatred for humankind. Scorned by the human race, the Monster retaliated with violence and death as only one so corrupt could administer."

"I don't know..." said Lynn. "I just wish there was some way we could help the poor creature rather than destroy him."

"What's done is done," I said. "The past cannot be changed. The only way to 'help' the Monster, and do my duty to humanity, is to destroy it. And believe me, dismantling it organ by organ is the only sure way to do that."

As our jet sped its way in the direction of Germany, I could not escape a growing sense of dread that had been with me almost since our plane had left the ground.

I had not enjoyed a good night's sleep in two days and I did not want to sleep now, not with the Frankenstein Monster inside the same cabin occupied by Lynn and me. The excitement of the last couple days, culminating in the retrieval of the giant, left me wearier than I could ever have imagined. I needed some stimulant to keep my eyes open and fully alert.

Lynn prepared some coffee — extra strong, as I preferred it — and I downed two consecutive cups. The caffeine was soon doing its job of keeping my eyes open.

By now, the sky was already growing dark.

"You're tired, too," I told Lynn.

"You've been up almost as long as I have. And there's no need for both of us to stay awake. Why not get some sleep? We've got a ways to go before we reach Bavaria. Once we get back to Castle Frankenstein, I'll need a very wide awake and alert assistant."

Lynn grinned and snuggled her head against my shoulder. Even though the aisle separated our seats, I could detect the sweet scent of her perfume. My instinct was to surrender myself and relax, but dared not risk doing so, despite the effects of the coffee. I rationalized that, if I could survive without sleep for one more night, my much-craved rest would be lost forever and I could face the future anew.

Finally Lynn drifted off into what appeared to be a very deep slumber.

That was when I heard the sound from the rear of the cabin.

Instantly I turned, grabbing the hypodermic needle, fearing that the Frankenstein Monster might be returning to consciousness. But upon looking back I saw that the beast had not moved, its colossal frame still undisturbed beneath its chains. Nevertheless my eyes stared incredulously at the sight greeting me — a man climbing over the back seat in which the giant was sleeping. Clutched in the man's steady hand was a .357 magnum.

I raised my hands and he took a few steps forward.

The man's face, which had a rather dark complexion, was familiar to me. I had seen it often enough during the past year, on television newscasts, on the front pages of newspapers, in magazine. Abu, which was the only name the media knew, had been wanted by police organizations worldwide. A Middle Eastern terrorist and mass murderer, who killed wantonly, efficiently and without compassion.

"Mr. Abu," I felt compelled to say, my voice deliberately low so as not to wake up Lynn.

He stepped closer to me, glancing for a few seconds toward the sleeping Frankenstein Monster, then holding the long barrel of his revolver close to my face so that I could smell both metal and the telltale traces of gunpowder.

"Yes, we do not wish to disturb your beautiful companion. Nor do we want to awaken your not-so-beautiful friend," he said, smiling, also speaking quietly. "So I suggest we take our 'business' down the aisle, where there will be less chance of our voices awakening either of them."

Motioning toward me with his gun, the man guided me down the aisle, the two of us stopping several feet away from the cockpit.

"I'm flattered that you recognize me," Abu told me, smiling broadly, his voice still low. "That means I must be doing my holy task well."

"How could I not recognize you?" I said, trying my best not to raise my voice. "You seem to wallow in the publicity, delighting in leaving eye witnesses to your crimes."

"Holy missions," Abu said, believing that he was correcting me. "As to the witnesses, yes, I prefer accepting full credit for the work I do. It seems, Dr. Winslow, that I am even more famous these days than you and that creature you brought back to life."

"What do you want?" I asked, always keeping his gun in sight. "Why are you here? Are you going to kill us, too?"

"As long as you do as I say, and as long as that Monster doesn't get in my way, perhaps you and your woman will live out your lives to old age."

Perhaps, if I moved fast enough, I might have grabbed that gun and yanked it away from Abu before he had time to squeeze back the trigger. But the man was a professional killer, one trained to react to the slightest aggression. My first concern, of course, was to Lynn, still peacefully asleep and oblivious to the drama taking place in the fore part of the cabin. If I struggled with this criminal now, that gun might discharge, either shooting Lynn or blasting a hole through the pressurized cabin's window or hull. For the moment, at least, it was better just to listen and leave Abu in charge of the situation.

I saw Abu look back at the slumbering beauty, an unsettling grin appearing on his face. Then he looked back at me.

"All I want ... for now, at least, is passage on your airplane."

"Passage?" I asked emphatically. "But... do you know where we're going? We're going to Germany. What possible interest could you have there?"

Smiling, he rested the long barrel of his weapon against my cheek. I felt my nerves tingle and he pressed the cold metal closer I



knew that a man like Abu would have no problem murdering either Lynn or me if the whim suited him. I also knew that, if I died this night, the Frankenstein Monster – a terrorist in its own right – would eventually revive to continue its bloody war against the human race.

Abu started to laugh, almost maniacally, yet quietly.

"I'm afraid you misunderstand me," he said. "We are not going to Germany, doctor."

"Not going to...? But..."

"No," he cut off my words, "for you see, even before we took to the air, I had a short, shall we call it, 'meeting' with your pilot. And I assured him what would happen to him, yourself and your woman – slowly and painfully – if he did not comply with my wishes. And so, he offered no argument to my 'request' of letting me stow away while he re-charted the course you had outlined for him."

"And just where is it that we're now going?" I asked him, fearful of whatever answer he might give me. I gazed toward one of the cabin windows. I could see the nearly full moon penetrating the blackness. Yet there was no way of determining just where we now were or precisely in what direction we were going.

Again he quietly laughed, the grating sound of his voice making me shudder.

"Don't you know?" he finally said. "Can't you even guess, Westerner? We are on our way to a place where I can be free of all the pressures, all of the law enforcement agencies out to bring me to what they call 'justice.'"

"Back to the Middle East?" I volunteered, stating what I believed to be the obvious.

He nodded. "Once back on the African continent and among my own people, no one will ever hear of Abu again. Of course, another crusader such as myself, but with a different name, may soon arise again to continue the sacred work I started out to do. Actually, we may not be that far away from my homeland right now."

"And once we get there?" I asked.

He shoved the barrel of his pistol against my stomach.

"Who knows? Perhaps my people will have use of your much-publicized scientific knowledge. Perhaps the Monster will find a home with us, working for our cause in return for food and protection." Again he looked back at Lynn. "Her? Well, I'm quite certain that, even if we must dispose of you and the creature, we'll find many uses for one so beautiful and golden-haired. The white slavery trade is still a thriving business where I come from."

I wanted to move upon him in that instant, to get my hands around his throat and squeeze the life out of him. But Abu was already forcing me along the aisle of the cabin in the direction of the cockpit.

I saw the pilot briefly turn toward me, a grim expression on his face. "I'm sorry, Dr. Winslow," he told me, his voice sounding sincere. "It was either do what he said, or..."

"I know," I said. "You did the only thing you could do. Where are we now?"

"We're approximately a hundred miles off the northern coast of Libya," the pilot answered, his hands shakily resting on the controls. "He hasn't yet told me of our final destination."

"You'll know soon enough," said the man with the gun. "Just maintain this course, flying south. I'll tell you where to land. And it better be a smooth landing. I plan to use this aircraft again, once I've disposed of any 'excess baggage.'" Abu's eyes flashed toward his revolver.

I noticed the reaction registering in the pilot's eyes as Abu spoke his words.

"But," the pilot started, "you promised that if I did what you wanted, there'd be no bloodshed."

Abu grinned, showing an array of yellowed teeth. "The first lesson to be learned in this world is never to trust a man holding a gun on you."

"You're going to kill us all?"

"Perhaps not all of you, not the ones I have use for. But I can surely find another pilot once we're back in my homeland."

"And Ms. Powell?" the pilot asked.

"I'm afraid she might prefer death to what Mr. Abu has planned for her," I said.

I saw the pilot's eyes enflame with hatred and rage, saw the lines in his face grow deep as an intense frown spread across his mouth and cheeks. He bit his lower lip, as if to emphasize a decision he was making in that moment, and his once shaking hands became tense and rigid.

His hands left the controls.

"No!" the pilot exclaimed, his voice cracking. "Not her!"

In a blur of movement, the pilot was out of his chair and, through the cramped quarters of the cockpit, leaping upon the terrorist. Abu reeled from the impact of the pilot's body, a startled look upon his face. The terrorist stumbled backwards, pinned to the cabin floor by the weight of his attacker, but did not release his weapon.

Almost instantly, I felt the plane arc into a plunge that sent me tumbling against the cabin wall, while the two men proceeded to struggle for possession of the gun.

A shot blasted back toward the cockpit, penetrating the main instrument panel and doing some noticeable damage, the likes of which I could not even guess. Another shot, and some of the plane's computers erupted in smoke. A third and the pilot's body went suddenly limp, a spray of crimson gore gushing from his forehead.

From the back of the cabin, I heard Lynn's voice as she suddenly awoke. "Burt?" she cried, confused and disoriented.

I wanted to hurry to Lynn's aid, but instead rushed into the cockpit and the jet's controls. My peripheral vision revealed that Abu was already getting back to his feet, the gun still clasped in one hand, blood from the man he had just killed splattered against his face. I worried that Abu, in his madness, might direct his anger at Lynn instead of me. The controls would have to wait. There was another matter to deal with that had priority over bringing the craft safely down.

Fighting to keep my balance in the descending jet, my weary body powered by the coffee as much as my own determination,

I sprang from the cockpit and upon the terrorist, grabbing his gun hand. As we struggled I saw, to my horror, the woman I loved, getting up from her chair, rubbing her eyes and staring at the scene now unfolding in front of her down the aisle.

"Keep...back..." I exclaimed, slamming a fist into Abu's jaw, thinking I may have heard it crack.

Lynn did as I instructed, keeping out of our way.

Praying that she would not be hit by a stray bullet, I maintained my struggle to get the pistol away from Abu. I felt Abu's trigger finger squeeze. Another shot fired, this one again going into the cockpit's controls, the bullet destroying more of the instruments required to keep this craft flying and on course.

Suddenly Abu, with an impressive burst of strength, tore away the weapon and, in almost the same moment, slammed the barrel against my cranium. Sharp pain banging through my brain, I dropped to the floor. Through hazy vision I beheld Abu raising his weapon for the kill, the man seemingly oblivious to the fact that the plane was still in its plunge. Assuming the gun was fully loaded to begin with, the man still had two shots left - one for each of his two potential victims.

I hoped that the pain would leave my head fast enough for me to do something. But all I could do was watch, helplessly, as Abu's finger tightened once again on the trigger of his .357 magnum.

## CHAPTER THREE

Lynn, bless her courage, had ignored what I told her and was quietly rushing toward us. In a blur of movement, she grabbed Abu's gun hand with all of her strength, not enough to restrain the terrorist but sufficient to create a diversion.

That was all the time I required to act.

Again I was off the floor, this time finding a good use for my old college football training, attacking Abu with a hard block that sent him toppling backwards into the connecting cabin. A moment later, my hands clasped his wrist, twisting the gun so that its barrel was not pointing in Lynn's direction.

"Lynn!" I shouted. "Keep back! I've got him under control!"

The Lear Jet, meanwhile, was *not* under control and continued to plunge. If only Lynn had learned how to pilot an airplane!

My muscles strained to keep the terrorist down. But his was the enhanced strength of a

fanatic, probably also a lunatic, and it taxed my abilities to their maximum just to keep Abu from getting up from the floor. My strength, however, was augmented also, increased by the knowledge that, if I did not defeat my adversary, the woman I loved would soon be, as would I, a corpse.

Granting, I managed to force the gun barrel to point at Abu's left shoulder and draw back the trigger. Less than a second following an explosive sound, the terrorist's shoulder erupted in a spurt of crimson. Moaning in defeat, futilely pressing his right hand against the flow of blood, Abu stopped trying to fight me.

Lynn and I exchanged a brief eye contact, after which I, exhausted and breathing heavily, staggered into the cockpit and toward the pilot's seat. In my hand was Abu's revolver with me, which must still have contained one live round of ammunition. I shoved the weapon into my belt and rapidly went to work. Fortunately I had flown various kinds of aircraft in the past and this one presented no difficulties. My first act as the pilot of this craft was to pull it out of its doom plunge. I experienced a welcome sensation in my stomach as the nose of the airplane angled upwards and eventually leveled off.

"Burt, you've done it," said Lynn, stepping over the barely moving Abu and the dead pilot to stand beside me. "You've saved us."

Yes, I had "done it." But there was a bloody corpse lying just inches away from me, and Abu might not survive the night, judging from the massive chest wound he had just taken. Soon there might be two dead bodies aboard this craft - two additional lives snuffed out, albeit indirectly, because of my personal involvement with the Frankenstein Monster. Had I never brought that thing back into existence, the pilot and Abu, regardless of the latter's own despicable career, would still be alive.

Lynn put her arms around me from behind. Leaning over, she hugged me, her long hair caressing my cheek. I felt tears as her face pressed gently against my own.

"At least we're flying on a level course," I told her. "But we're still not out of the stew."

"What's the matter?" Lynn asked. "You're good at flying planes. And who is that crazy man with the gun?"

Lynn and I had been through some of the most bizarre adventures as could ever befall a couple of human beings. If anyone could stand the truth, it was she; there was no reason to conceal anything from her.

A few sentences of explanation sufficed in

telling her about Abu and his mad attempt to return to his homeland in the Middle East. Looking back as I talked, I could see that the terrorist was just barely moving and that his eyes were staring blankly into space. Lynn moved close to the man, felt for a pulse, then looked back at me and nodded.

"The problem," I went on, "is no longer that fanatic but our present location. One of Abu's shots struck the main instrument panel, which caused considerable damage to our instruments. To be honest, I'm not really sure where we are, except that it's someplace over Africa. Last time we had a precise fix on our whereabouts we were flying in a more or less southerly direction. But now, without the sun for a reference point and after coming out of that plunge, we could be headed anywhere."

"Do we have enough fuel to get to Germany?" she asked.

"I think so, but ... damn it all! I hate having to guess at —"

Before I could finish my sentence, it happened — something that, to this day, I still have not been able to explain, something that made no sense and, to my knowledge, no basis in any scientific principals I had ever read about. "Something" ... a force of some kind (I did not know what else to call it) seized the ship, shaking it so that its hull rattled as if in the thrall of some gigantic tornado or cyclone. Knocked off balance, Lynn fell against me, her supple body collapsing onto my lap. Through the plane's windows, seen even through the darkness of the night, I perceived what seemed to be great rippling waves of energy, the origins of which I could not even speculate. Accompanied by sounds best described as the wailing of some alien wind, those waves penetrated the windows, never disturbing the materials of which they were constructed, to rush through the cockpit, passing through our bodies, jarring us with a jolt akin to some kind of alien electrical shock, then continuing back through the cabin.

Lynn clutched me tighter, neither of us able to speak.

The plane, in the grip of those unknown forces, shook and tossed, seemingly on the verge of being torn apart. More than that, we suddenly seemed to be traveling at some incalculable speed. I wondered how long it would take before we were borne as far south as the Congo or even the southern tip of the continent.

Then, as suddenly as those forces had come, they were gone, and we were again cruising through the night sky. Where we had been swept at that incredible velocity, I could

not even guess.

Lynn and I looked into each other eyes. Her expression told me that she craved an explanation to what we had just experienced.

Shaking my head, I said, "I don't have a clue."

"It was like ..." she began, pausing thoughtfully, "like we were gripped by ... oh, I don't know."

Instantly I thought about the Frankenstein Monster, fearing that our bizarre experience might have shaken the beast back to consciousness. Looking back, however, I could see that the tranquilizer and also the chains were still doing their jobs.

I looked at the control panel. The shaking of the ship had caused some obvious damage to the ship's computer system and controls. I was beginning to doubt if I could bring the plane to a safe landing even if we did find our way back to Germany.

"At least we're alive and unharmed," I said, "and for that we should both be grateful. As to where we are ..."

Looking out the window, I could see the moonlit ground below. Obviously we had lost considerable altitude during our recent inexplicable encounter. I could plainly see the blue-tipped peaks of a vast mountain range jutting up from what could have the expanse of a great plateau. Thick clouds, drifting in patches, made visibility difficult.

"Does that terrain tell you where we are?" Lynn inquired.

"Not really," I said. "Just some African mountain range. That's all I can say for certain. But maybe I'll keep cruising at this altitude, at least until I can get a better fix on our whereabouts. In the meantime, we might as well enjoy the scenery down there, at least what we can see of it."

"Nice moon," said Lynn, smiling warmly. "Not quite full, but big and bright enough to be romantic."

"That's my Lynn," I said. "Frankenstein's Monster in the cabin, two dead human bodies on the floor, a plane lost in the night over a continent we had no intention of visiting, and you find something romantic."

"Oh, Burt," she said with a chuckle, "do you always have to —?"

We saw the thing as it swept across the moon, a great shadow or silhouette suggesting the wing of some enormous bat or demon from Dante's Hell.

"What was that?" Lynn said, her eyes wide and staring at the moon.

"Whatever it was, we both saw it, which

means it was no hallucination," I answered.

"Could it have been a bat?" she asked.

"That large? I don't know of any species of bat that big — not even in the wilds of Africa."

Even as I spoke, something outside — perhaps the very thing we had viewed passing in front of the moon — struck against the outer hull of the plane, making a loud thumping sound. The impact was not strong enough to cause any perceptible damage, but who could predict what another, more strategically directed blow to our aircraft's exterior would accomplish.

Lynn stared at me, a look of fear on her lovely face.

"You're certainly right about that being no hallucination," she said.

Again the thing smacked hard against the hull.

In a desperate attempt at getting us anywhere else but here, I brought the jet's nose up, arcing about thirty degrees or more. Yet before we could elevate to any significant altitude, the flying thing collided hard against the cockpit's window, the forward movement of the ship keeping the creature stuck to the Plexiglas.

I struggled with the controls, doing no more than bringing the nose down again.

"My God!" I gasped, staring ahead at the hellish apparition.

"Burt! What is it?"

"I ... I'm not sure."

Of one thing I was certain, however. The thing glaring at us through the Plexiglas was not your typical Unidentified Flying Object, but a thing of flesh and blood. I could see that it's head, which was displayed flash across the window of the cockpit, was long and narrow, terminating in an elongated beak, its large eye set in the side of the head. At the back of the head, a narrow crest extended almost as long as the beak. I could also see that the wings attached to the arms and that the body was covered by something resembling a white coating of down-like fur. Slowly the creature's mouth opened and closed and I could see that it was toothless.

I had seen such things before — at least their skeletons, the living variety found only in scientific books I had encountered in the past and occasionally in fanciful motion pictures.

"It's a *Pteranodon*," I informed Lynn.

"A what —?" she asked, startled and confused.

"A *Pteranodon*," I repeated. "One of the largest of the pterosaurs, a group of flying reptiles that lived during the Mesozoic Era."



boots.

In the moonlight I saw something rapidly rushing towards us ... not another *Pteranodon*, but the jagged peak of a cloud-kissed mountain. Desperately trying to make the cockpit controls work, I flailed miserably, succeeding at nothing. Lynn and I saw that peak rush toward us from below, its great mass filling the window for a moment before one of our ship's wings cracked against the dark rock, the impact knocking us almost senseless.

There was no longer any hope for us, no chance at righting the ship's course.

A crash was inevitable. Yet, even if we survived the impact, there might still be that flying reptile to consider. I had read that such toothless creatures were basically fish eaters. But if they were also opportunists, like so many hunting animals, perhaps the *Pteranodon* that encountered our ship might enjoy a moonlight feast this night upon the softer parts of us human "prey."

I felt Lynn's fingers dig deeply into my arm. I noticed that her eyes were closed. Better, I thought, that she did not see the ground as it rushed up to the plane to claim us.

At last, if this were to be the end of the world for Lynn Powell and me, we would face that end together.

## CHAPTER FOUR



blivion!

That seemed to be the only outcome, when a sea of blackness, the moonlight rippling across its shimmering surface, appeared through the cockpit window. Luckily, perhaps miraculously, that ebony expanse did not destroy our plane as we made contact with it, but rather received us in its liquid embrace.

Nevertheless, the impact of the plane cutting through the water had jarring effect, slamming both Lynn and me against the walls of our cramped space, knocking us unconscious.

We had lost all sense of time.

When we finally awakened, the welcome rays of dawn were streaking through the windows of the airplane. Both Lynn and I were bruised from the rough descent, but we were alive. I held the woman I loved closer to me.

Alive? I wondered, who else was still alive in this plane besides the two of us?

Looking down, I saw that Abu was no longer on the floor where we had left him.

"You mean a kind of flying dinosaur?"

"Not exactly," I corrected her. "But a relative. That one should have died out at the end of the Cretaceous period, some sixty-five million years ago."

"I wish someone would've informed it to do so," said Lynn. "What's it doing out there ... and in the Twenty-first Century?"

"We'll worry about that later," I said. "Right now our main concern is getting away from it, before it causes any damage to the plane."

We were still on a more or less downward

course again, and the instruments were performing even more erratically than before. Finally, the prehistoric flying reptile slipped off the window, giving us one glimpse of its great wings as it soared away into the night. Fighting the controls, I found them to be virtually useless now, having been severely damaged by our flight through that weird vortex or whatever it was just minutes ago.

All I needed now, to make our predicament a total catastrophe, was for the Frankenstein Monster to awaken from its sleep and come charging into the cockpit on its raised black

Worse still, the .357 magnum I had wrestled away from him was also gone. Was it possible that he had somehow found the strength to extricate himself from this plane before Lynn and I regained consciousness? Or was he still in the plane somewhere, either dead or yet alive, waiting to make some last-ditch move against us? Looking around, I saw that the main door of the plane was open, so I opted for the former explanation. Surprisingly Abu, when we were out cold and he had the chance, did not shoot us. Perhaps, I reasoned, he was saving his ammunition for whatever dangers he might encounter outside.

It was not Abu, however, with whom I was immediately concerned. I heard a low moan issue from the cabin of the aircraft, a familiar deep-throated sound that I had heard too many times before. Thrusting a hand into my jacket pocket, I found my syringe to be thankfully still intact.

Lynn and I exchanged glances, and I rushed down the aisle of the cabin, where the gigantic figure of Frankenstein's Monster was already beginning to move. In another few moments it would stretch those elongated limbs and try to force its way through its chains. I could not give the brute that chance.

I saw the heavy cyclids lift, the sailow orbs looking toward me.

"Sorry," I said, producing the hypodermic needle, "but it's not yet time for your wake-up call." That said, I—for the third time since the Monster's retrieval from the quicksand—plunged the point into its arm and drove home the tranquilizer.

A hate-filled snarl issued from behind clenched teeth. For nearly half a minute, the beast glared at me, feebly attempting to break those chains, but finally slumping back into unconsciousness. Clearly the creature's unusual recuperative systems were already at work, devising immunity to the drug. I wondered how long it would be before the Monster would be able to shrug off the tranquilizer altogether.

No time to worry about that now, I told myself. The important thing was that, if only for the present, the Monster was not an immediate threat.

Returning to Lynn, who had been watching my every move, I hurried to the main control board. Instinctively I tried the plane's radio, finding that it did not work, either from damages incurred during our rough landing, or from the mysterious forces that had buffeted and invaded the plane the previous night. Knowing in advance that my cellular phone would not work in our present location,

I tried it anyway, the result confirming that.

I shifted my attention again, this time to the window, gazing out in an attempt to get some sense of where the Lear Jet had come to rest.

Apparently the aircraft had arced over the water, then skipped across the surface, finally leveling off. Being pressurized, the Lear Jet was—for the present, anyway—floating atop the surface of what seemed to be a fairly large lake. Volcanic openings obviously existed beneath the lake, as evidenced by the smoke issuing, in various places, from bubbles bursting from the water's surface. The overall effect was suggestive of dry ice plopped into a glass of water, only on a much larger scale.

Across the lake's surface, like some wispy white serpents, crawled trails of morning mist. Above the lake was a canopy of fog that blotted out much of the sky.

From what I could see of the sky, that *Pteranodon*—if that in fact is what the creature was that had menaced us the night before—was nowhere to be seen. However, the smear across the cockpit's window, a remnant of the creature's drool, constituted hard evidence that the winged demon was not something spawned in Lynn's and my imaginations. For the present, at least, the sky seemed devoid of all life, extinct forms or otherwise. However, there was no telling what hellish flying things might be soaring above that thick fog layer that even managed to obscure the sun.

"How long do you think the plane will stay afloat?" Lynn asked me, her attention on the world outside.

I could feel the ship subtly tip forward.

"Who can say?" I responded. "So far luck has been with us. But I'd feel a lot safer if we were out of here and back on solid ground."

"And what about that flying reptile? What if it should come back for us?"

"I'm willing to take my chances," I said. "If this plane goes down with us still inside it, well..." At least if the plane sank with us already ashore, it would take the Frankenstein Monster along with it to the bottom.

"Come on," I said to her, taking Lynn by the wrist and leading her out of the cockpit. "We have to get out of here before the ship sinks entirely with us trapped inside. At least out there, no matter what awaits us, we'll have some kind of a chance to survive."

"Aye, aye, 'Captain Winslow,'" she said, saluting.

I smiled. At least Lynn had not lost her sense of humor in our current plight.

We worked rapidly, hoping that the owners

of our rented airplane had stored on board some items that we might be able to use, searching through those items even as the Lear Jet's position shifted downward by about twenty degrees. Moving fast and efficiently was now our top priority. For within mere minutes the plane, like some modern *Titanic*, would be lost forever below the surface of this unknown lake.

A surprising number of survival items had been stuffed away in the aircraft's storage areas. There was not enough time to grab everything that we needed, but we were able to snag some items that I considered to be essential for our survival. Of primary importance was a large inflatable rubber raft. Next we secured a couple of M-16 rifles with ample supplies of ammunition, two Bowie knives, some rope, a pair of rowing paddles, and also some cans and packages of food. There were undoubtedly numerous other items on board that would have been of use to a couple city-bred people suddenly forced to survive in the wilds of some unknown country (a test would have been nice). But finding and then getting them off the plane would require time, a commodity that, at that moment, was in very short supply.

"Let's get out of this deathtrap," I said to the woman with the golden hair, leading her toward the exit.

Upon poking our heads outside, Lynn and I were both immediately struck by the richness and purity of the air; that, plus a distant and baleful sound, perhaps the roar of some unknown species of animal.

Even as we experienced for the first time the environment which, perhaps forever, would be our new home, I heard the quiet yet portentous rattling of metal. Turning, I saw that the Frankenstein Monster was beginning to stir. Its eyes were still closed, however, and it might be a while before the giant regained even a semblance of consciousness. I thought again of the syringe and wondered if there was time to administer another jolt of tranquilizer. Feeling the airplane shift again, knowing that within minutes the aircraft could be below the lake's surface, I decided that it was best to keep focused upon getting Lynn and myself, with our supplies, out of the sinking winged tomb.

Within a minute, our raft was filling with air and resting atop the waters below us, taking on a recognizable shape.

Lynn was already seated in the raft next to our supplies, her blonde hair blowing gently in the breeze as she looked around at her new



surroundings. Then she looked back toward the plane as I abandoned the Lear Jet and entered the small floating craft. It was as I took my place beside her that I heard, from behind me, a familiar voice. It was faint and the words were sometimes interrupted by coughing.

Turning, I beheld the terrorist Abu, his shoulder wound a mass of clotted blood, weak but alive nonetheless. He was crouched on one of the wings of the Lear Jet, his shirt stained with blood, the revolver, probably reloaded by now, held in two shaking hands. Abu did not seem far from death, but enough life remained in him to squeeze that trigger. Indeed, his resilience – no doubt toughened after many years spent “in the field” – was astonishing.

“I knew ... if I waited ...” he said, coughing blood as he spoke, “that you ... would provide me with ... a means to escape.”

“Must say, Abu, your recuperative powers are impressive,” I said.

“I’ve survived worse wounds than this, Dr. Winslow,” Abu gloated, his voice fainter than before. “I’ve had to learn to do so leading the life I do.”

The Lear Jet moved again, the nose dipping about another five degrees. Abu, however, maintained his position on the wing.

I considered the rifles and Bowie knives already stashed on the raft. We had already loaded the M-16s, and I might also be able to reach one of the knives if I moved fast enough... but probably not fast enough to evade one of Abu’s bullets. Also, there was clearly no chance in shoving off in the raft before Abu managed to get off his shots.

Lynn’s body noticeably tensed. I had put her through so many perils during our professional and personal relationship and now I had brought her into another. Here we were, trapped in a raft on an unknown lake in a world where pterosaurs yet lived, and at the mercy of a financial killer. It was amazing that our sanity had remained intact for this long!

“You’re taking me...with you,” Abu said threateningly.

The last thing I wanted now was to bring Abu, a man who would kill without even the slightest provocation, joining us aboard the raft. Yet, no matter what his crimes, could we really just leave him to die atop this rapidly sinking aircraft? One thing was certain; unlike the Monster, Abu was still a human being and at least deserving a chance to survive.

I took a chance. “Then put down that gun.”

“What? Do you really expect me to—?”

“If you kill us,” I went on, “you won’t have anyone to row this raft for you. And from the look of that wound and the sound of that cough, I’m wagering that you’re in no condition to row it yourself.”

“The decision is yours to make,” added Lynn. “But I’m guessing we’re more valuable to you alive.”

Abu’s face became a mask of confusion. He looked around at the great stretches of water all around him. Then the plane jerked downwards again, almost knocking the terrorist off his perch. Water was already beginning to enter the plane through the open door.

Sighing, at last he lowered his weapon. “All right,” he said, “you win.”

Albeit reluctantly, I extended my hand and helped Abu board the raft, carefully seating him next to me. It was strange sitting beside a mass murderer; but then, I had grown accustomed to being in the company of the Frankenstein Monster, as well as other bizarre characters.

Utilizing one of the paddles, I shoved the raft away from the airplane.

As we drifted peacefully away from the Lear Jet, I saw the craft, surrounded by the morning mists, finally sink deeper beneath the water’s surface. Thoughts raced through my mind as to what my financial responsibility would be, if any, once Lynn and I returned to civilization. For the present, however, achieving the latter seemed to be a fairly remote possibility, as we had no means of contacting the outside world. My one consolation at the moment was that the plane, on its one-way journey to the bottom of this lake, was taking the Frankenstein Monster with it. Perhaps the waters would accomplish what my dissecting tools would have, had our journey to Germany been completed as planned, extinguishing that spark of eternal life.

“If only you could have given him that shot,” Lynn told me, looking sadly back at the plane as its tail began to dip below the water. “I hate to think of him being conscious and trapped like that. What a horrible way to die.”

“There just wasn’t any other way, my darling,” I told her with honesty. “At least in my estimation there wasn’t. I couldn’t take the chance. It was the Monster’s life or ours and I chose the latter.”

As the last trace of the Lear Jet sank from our sight, I continued to row the raft, always keeping an eye on Abu. The man had become atypically quiet and there was a look of

disappointment, more accurately failure, on his face. Yes, he had succeeded in returning to the continent of his birth, but his “holy mission” had terminated in some unknown area of that land. Perhaps he was painfully aware that his own death was imminent and that he was going to meet his ancestors without completing his bloody work in this mortal world.

While I rowed, I tried to piece together the bits of evidence that might reveal where it was that our aircraft came down. At the moment, all I could be certain of was that we seemed to be somewhere in Africa, at least based upon the direction in which we were flying.

There was also to consider the matter of those strange forces that had attacked our craft the previous night. There was something eerie, almost unearthly about them, especially how they penetrated the very fabric of the plane itself. Having experienced some fantastic things in the recent past, having origins in both science and the supernatural, I could not rule out the possibility that those forces transported us to some place unknown to any mapmaker. Were we even in the same dimension that defined the world we knew? Right now there were a number of possibilities to consider.

Whatever place it was that we had come to, it seemed to be totally untainted by civilization. Based upon the terrain Lynn and I had seen during our descent, the mountain peaks and that great expanse of rock, I hypothesized that we had crash-landed atop some relatively flat highland area, possibly a plateau. Perhaps the mists that settled over this land had kept it hidden from aircraft and, consequently, off any maps.

An amazing feature of this region was its warm climate. Although we were apparently in an elevated area, the air was hot and also humid, like the atmosphere experienced in the tropics. I opened my shirt to cool off, but none of us could stop perspiring.

“Where do you think we are?” asked Lynn, wiping the moisture from her lovely face.

“My educated guess?” I asked, feigning a studious look. “Hmmm, I’d say Africa.”

“Thanks for the enlightenment,” she returned, smiling at me.

I smiled back, but had very little to be jovial about, especially with the armed and always dangerous Abu sharing space in our raft.

There were no indications of any animal life, save for the occasional roar or snarl of some unseen animal. The *Pteranodon* had not

made a return appearance and I was hoping that its presence last night was some kind of fluke of nature. For one minute we heard what sounded almost like the trumpeting of elephants, although the sound was deeper, different than any pachyderms I had ever heard.

There was something about the plant life, however, that made me uneasy. The vegetation was lush on the land, growing profusely. But there was something not quite "right" about it. Some of it had the familiar look of modern flora, but many of the trees and shrubs and the giant cypresses resembled plants I had seen in books about ancient life.

Stranger, there was something about the very atmosphere of this land, an inexplicable kind of quality that reminded me somewhat of my experience the night before with those weird forces encountered in the plane. Maybe there was some connection between them, I suggested to myself, some power that I was becoming most interested in trying to comprehend.

I noticed that the sounds of wildlife were having an effect upon our armed passenger. The delirium he was suffering from his gunshot must have colored his perception of those noises, possibly making them sound in his imagination like the wails and howls of devils and evil spirits.

Abu finally spoke again. "No!" he exclaimed, coughing, waving his revolver at us. "You're not going to keep me a prisoner here with those ... those things out there just waiting to devour me!"

The man was both delirious and afraid. I saw his attention shift to the two M-16s, one resting near my foot, the other beside Lynn's. If Abu got possession of the rifles, in addition to his revolver, Lynn and I would have no chance to oppose him.

At last the moment I had been dreading arrived, as Abu's hands clamped upon the rifle closest to me. There was no time for me to steal it back from him before he pulled the trigger. A scuffle within such confined quarters could end in tragedy.

Acting more on instinct than logic, I moved. As Abu made an effort to spin around with his purloined weapon, I slammed the edge of my paddle against his skull, drawing blood. He groaned and, stunned but still in some command of his faculties, made an attempt to stand and aim the rifle at me.

Rushing forward, Lynn grabbed the rifle, distracting Abu, and turning the weapon's barrel upwards so that a loud discharge shot a

projectile into the misty sky.

A final swing of my paddle sent Abu falling backwards out of the raft and splashing in the water, unfortunately taking the rifle with him. I saw the weapon vanish beneath the surface of the lake, saw the stream of scarlet mingle with the waters as Abu, staring blankly at the sun, began to float away.

"Is he dead?" asked Lynn, watching the motionless form drift along.

"Probably. Should I make certain, and, if he's not, bring him back again?"

There was no time for either of us to decide what to do. Fate, if there was such a thing, was determining the terrorist's outcome. For just a few hundred feet away from the raft, something incredible was beginning to happen.

"What's that?" asked Lynn, pointing toward a spot where the lake's surface was now churning as if by some underwater disturbance. Something was under the water, something huge, based upon the size of the dark shape moving steadily toward both Abu and our rubber craft. Something writhing beneath the water and very much alive.

Wasting no time, I grabbed the remaining rifle and trained it, as the colossal living shape continued to inch toward the terrorist and us.

Then I gasped in disbelief!

Lynn, suppressing a scream, clutched tightly my leg.

What appeared to be some enormous serpent, its mouth lined with countless sharp teeth, like something spawned in the fiery lakes of Hell, slowly arose from the surface of the lake to penetrate its mists. Within seconds, however, I knew that this monster was no mere snake, hellish or otherwise. It seemed to be merging from a much larger mass, a body still mostly concealed by the waters through which this horror swam. I could see then that the creature - some kind of gigantic reptile - was propelling itself through the water by means of four, paddle-like flippers.

Finally the broad back of the thing broke the water's surface. Its mouth opened wide to release a hiss that sounded like a hundred snakes.

No longer was the notion of a living *Pteranodon* ... or of plants that existed in a previous age ... in this modern world seem that far-fetched.

"Oh, Burt," said Lynn, holding tightly onto me, "it's like something from the dinosaur age, like that thing that attacked us last

night!"

Raising my rifle, I tried to get the monster's head in my sights. But that neck was moving too swiftly, the head too small, to get a good aim. I could not even guess at the size of the brain I would have to hit inside that diminutive skull. Luckily for us, the creature still did not attack us.

"I don't know how," I said, "but somehow this land we've been forced into is untouched by the natural passage of time -- inhabited by various kinds of creatures that should have died out millions of years ago. This one, if I remember my paleontology, seems to be an *Elasmosaurus* -- one of a group of plesiosaurs or aquatic reptiles. They came in various shapes and sizes. Just our bad luck to meet up with one of the largest."

Lynn glanced in the direction of the shore. "I can't even imagine what's out there, making all those sounds. Burt, I've never been this scared in all my life!"

Considering some of the things Lynn had already experienced, she had just said something profound.

"At least the thing hasn't attacked us yet," I said, still trying to aim my weapon at the animal's daring head. "If I could just get a good shot at it ..."

"Maybe it's not interested so much in us," she said, nodding toward the floating body of Abu.

Perhaps Lynn was correct in her judgment. The *Elasmosaurus* had already had much opportunity to make its move against us. Maybe it had seen us and already forgotten that we existed. From my basic knowledge of paleontology I remembered how so many of the texts I had read stressed the smallness of the brains of the great reptiles of the Mesozoic Era. But smart or not, animals with teeth like those displayed by this plesiosaur were clearly meat-eaters and probably most often hungry. It would require no thought for that relatively tiny head to come down for its first taste of human food.

Still fighting to aim my M-16, I watched the head of the monster dart through the mists, then savagely dart down, splashing the floating body of Abu under the water.

Lynn and I exchanged looks of horror. I am sure we both prayed that Abu's life had already ebbed away. When the animal's head again emerged into view, its mouth glistening with blood, we could see Abu's body -- at least two-thirds of it, anyway -- locked between its clamped-down jaws.

Turning away from the sight, Lynn pressed her face against my chest.

I too, who had seen much horror in my life, was compelled to turn away.

Opening my eyes again, I saw the monster gulping down its prey, and then return its massive bulk beneath the water.

Abu's body had provided us with a diversion, albeit a temporary one, as the *Elasmosaurus* feasted. But the monster's body was huge, as must have been its appetite. Soon the great reptile would be back for its second and third courses, delicacies that I was determined the monster would never enjoy.

Thus, Lynn and I taking our seats, I proceeded to paddle as I never had before toward the shore.

But as we approached the land, there came from behind us that ghostly *hissing* sound.

Looking back, I could see that the

plesiosaur was already at the surface again, its toothy mouth showing no traces of Abu. And, propelled by those great flippers, the monster was moving toward us through the water with incredible speed.

Still tired from lack of sleep, I pushed myself harder and faster, my muscles aching from the exertion.

Glancing over at Lynn, I saw that she was not reacting with the look of terror I had expected, but rather that she was virtually expressionless, as if she were coming to accept a fate of never leaving this savage realm alive. From the predicament we were now in, I wondered if I might also soon accept such a fate.

As I continued to paddle, the *Elasmosaurus* came upon us, its hungry mouth open, dripping with both water and saliva. The head

rose high above us and again came that terrible *hiss*.

Then that serpentine neck came down for its second meal of human flesh.

## CHAPTER FIVE

**M**ixed images assailed my mind in what I believed were to be Lynn and my last moments alive on this planet:

The yellowish countenance of the Frankenstein Monster looming above me, its electrodes and stitched scars hideous in the light thrown off by the apparatus in its maker's laboratory. Superstitious townspeople pursuing me and the thing that I had unleashed upon them through a Bavarian street. Our pilot murdered, his head marked by a gaping red hole, for his valiant attempt at saving Lynn and me. What remained of Abu's mangled body dangling from the jaws of a creature that should have died out some sixty-five million years ago.

Now the very same monster that had devoured the terrorist was about to feast again. An agonizing pain penetrated my gut, not over what the *Elasmosaurus* would do to me, but to Lynn. No, that would not happen!

Lynn pressed herself closer against my body, her arm tightening around my waist.

Again I took aim with my M-16. The reptile's head was closer now and easier to line up in my sights. I waited a few crucial moments longer, enough to make sure that I could place a bullet neatly between the animal's eyes.

Smelling the reptile's rancid breath, I eased back my trigger finger and fired.

I saw part of the monster's head explode, at least some remains of its minuscule brain hopefully among the blood-soaked shards flying off in all directions. At the same time, the great neck jerked backwards, bending slightly in a fore and aft direction. But my shot was still not sufficient to kill the animal. Infuriated as if by the attack of a parasite, the plesiosaur advanced again, hissing more hideously than ever.

We were still a considerable distance away from the shore. There was no way that we could row there in time to escape another attack. Once more I took aim, hoping that another shot would cause sufficient damage. But I never fired for, as we were then to learn, this prehistoric world had its share of miracles as well as its terrors. Just as we had been hurled into a lake instead of crashing against the mountain peaks of this bizarre world, some other serendipitous event was coming to



our aid.

For as the head of the *Elasmosaurus* zoomed down for the kill, the waters erupted with a monstrous turbulence that sent our raft tossing uncontrollably amid a wall of gigantic waves. We were thrown in every direction imaginable, the water drenching us, but at least whatever it was that was creating this disturbance was hurling us away from that plesiosaur.

"Hold me!" exclaimed Lynn, clutching me tighter.

"And you me!" I answered, needing her closeness as much as she needed mine.

Still holding my rifle, I held Lynn with all of my strength, the two of us fighting not to topple into the water as our raft continued to be tossed about. It was as if we had been seized in the grip of a tidal wave. But whatever was creating those waves was, like the plesiosaur, a living – although much more massive – creature.

Already the *Elasmosaurus* was ignoring us, its attention fixed now upon the thing creating those towering waves. And as it turned to face whatever it was that was offering such a challenge to its domain, its short tail smacked our raft, giving us an added burst of speed toward the shore.

Looking back again, we saw the plesiosaur's elongated neck halt abruptly as, with a deafening roar, a set of the most enormous jaws I had ever seen snap down upon it and not let go. The creature that had just burst from the waters resembled some gigantic lizard, with a short neck and a huge head, the mouth of which was lined with formidable teeth. Unlike a lizard, however, this latest reptilian arrival sported flippers where the feet would otherwise be. Like a lizard, this monster had a long and muscular tail, which slashed at the water to continue stirring up those waves.

"Another plesiosaur?" asked Lynn, only barely interested.

"Looks more to me like what scientists call a mosasaur," I said, "one of the true rulers of the Mesozoic seas. That's a big one, perhaps *Mosasaurus* itself or *Tylosaurus*."

Indeed, whatever its generic name might be, the monster was a magnificent specimen. Although paleontology was never my main field, I had harbored an interest in things prehistoric since my childhood and, even as an adult, I tried to keep "up to date" on some of the latest discoveries and theories in that field. One thing I knew was that plesiosaurs and mosasaurs, at least back in Mesozoic times, were natural enemies. From what we

were witnessing now, some things did not change much, even after so long a time. What was happening here might well prove to be our salvation.

"Don't worry, Lynn," I said, trying to sound assuring, "the last thing on that monster's excuse for a mind right now is us."

My theorizing proved correct. Neither of those two hissing and roaring water monsters seemed interested in us altogether. Apparently all that interested either of them now was the destruction of the other and in filling its belly with the other's scaly flesh.

Lynn grabbed one of the paddles and the two of us resumed our water trip toward the shore, finally managing to move out of the range of giant waves created by the two battling creatures. I feared that my own strength would finally give out before we managed to move far enough from that scene of carnage. But persevering, the pair of us managed to get our little craft away and safely closer to the shore.

Gazing back now and then as we paddled, we saw the war of the great reptiles continue to rage. Repeatedly the mosasaur's mouth bit through the neck of the plesiosaur, chomping through muscle and ligament and crunching through its lengthy army of cervical vertebrae. The latter creature, still doing its best to put up a losing fight, could accomplish little more than make futile attempts at whacking its adversary with its paddles. But blows that might have crushed a human being meant nothing against the thick hide of the short-necked terror.

Great sprays of water shot into the air, its color changed by the gushers of reptilian blood.

The plesiosaur seemed unaware that it was losing this clash of titans. The mosasaur's fangs bit deeper into its long but sinewy neck. The plesiosaur's small head hissed and snarled, as more blood erupted from its mouth. Finally, after a final crunch through the bones of its neck, the head plopped off its neck, releasing a flow of liquid red, then dropped into the water. Devoid of its brain, the flippers of the *Elasmosaurus* continued to thrash about, mechanically at least. Moments later, the victorious mosasaur submerged beneath the surface of the water, taking its huge prize along with it.

Again the waters of the lake became calm. But both Lynn and I knew, based upon this most recent experience, that at any moment some other perpetually hungry denizen of these waters could poke its toothy head up in search of a quick and bloody breakfast.

Needless to mention, we wasted no time in completing our trip to shore.

The mists were clearing by the time we, drenched from top to bottom, dragged the raft onto the sand. Undoubtedly, judging from the frequent animal sounds heard coming from deeper inland, there were many more dangers to confront us in this strange lost land. Yet, at least on solid ground our chances for survival were increased several times over. Here we had the options to run and climb and hide, if necessary. Indeed, it felt somewhat reassuring to set foot once again on *terra firma*, this being the first time either of us had done so since taking off from England.

Gazing around at our prehistoric surroundings, I was immediately reminded by *The Lost World*, a novel written during the early Twentieth Century by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes. The novel, which I had read as a teenager and which was the inspiration for a number of motion-picture and other adaptations, was about a similar prehistoric plateau, untouched by time, in South America. I wondered if Doyle had made his world of dinosaurs and apemen up from whole cloth, or if he might have based it upon a real locality such as the one Lynn and I were now stuck in. The thought also occurred to me that those weird forces that swept over and through the plane might have actually, through some strange quirk of time and space, actually transported us from one continent to another, and that we were not now in Africa at all but in Doyle's South American "lost world."

There would be plenty of time later for such meanderings. I noticed that Lynn had become more relaxed since we came ashore. For a while I had worried that, given our current situation, all of this craziness was finally starting to have the worst possible negative effect upon the young woman. There was an unsettling look in her eyes during our experiences on the lake, but I thought it best not to say anything about it. Lynn had triumphantly survived everything from madmen and monsters to things supernatural. I had little doubts that she would get through this current situation with equal success.

"Before we make any further plans," I said, "I think we need to find a place where we can stow the raft, in case we need to use it again."

"Sounds like a plan to me," she said with only half interest, smiling at me.

Looking around, I spotted an alcove in the rocks above, large enough to harbor our rubber craft with room to spare. Then, picking

up the remaining M-16, I strapped it to my back like some would-be "Rambo."

Lynn, I knew, preferred eschewing the use of firearms. Fortunately for us, however, I had been quite a marksman during my college days, at least when the targets were not the moving miniature heads of attacking plesiosaurs. Picking up the two Bowie knives, I handed one to Lynn, who made a half-hearted effort to shove it into the waist of her jeans.

"Well," I started, just trying to make some conversation, "at least we're safe for a while." I reached behind me to touch the stock of my rifle. "If we could survive those two water reptiles," I went on, briefly looking toward the Mesozoic waters where, just minutes ago, two Mesozoic monsters had been fighting to the death, "we should have a much better chance where we are now."

I noticed then that Lynn was crying. I pulled her closer me, the still-wet clothing clinging to her shapely body, and we kissed with passion. Then she looked up at me, her blue eyes wide and teary. I could guess what she was about to ask me.

"Burt," she said, her voice fainter than usual, "are we ever going to be free of all... this?"

How could I answer her? In truth, ever since I brought back the Frankenstein Monster our lives had been hardly more than a series of terrible experiences. Now we were stuck in a lost world of prehistoric dangers, and with no apparent means of ever getting away from it.

"I know," I said, but knew that this was no time for me to launch into any self-pitying speech. "At least we're finally rid of the Frankenstein Monster. And, if it's any consolation to you, I didn't have to go through with its dismantling."

"I'm afraid," Lynn answered, the sad expression on her face unchanging, "that our lives together will soon come to an end. That this will be the last 'adventure' we share, whether it be good or bad. We've been through so much together, Burt, in the relatively brief time we've known... loved one another. We've stuck with each other no matter what. But now... here... this..." She looked around as she spoke.

How I wanted to say something that would give her hope that someone would come to our rescue or that we would find some way out of this place! But in my heart of hearts I knew that, if I said anything overly optimistic, I would be lying, and the two of us always spoke the truth to one another. The mountain

range that constituted this prehistoric world was uncharted, barely more than their peaks obscured by mist. All forms of communication with the outer world had been cut off. Yet, given Lynn's current spirits, the last thing she needed to hear from me was pessimism. Lynn's morale needed serious boosting. I needed to tell her something...

"Think of the past," I told her, "how many situations we managed to get through that, at the time, seemed like lost causes. I've never been one to give up, Lynn. I'm not about to now."

She forced a smile.

"What really makes me so unhappy," she said, "is not being stuck here. At least we're together. But we were so close..."

"Close?"

"To what we'd been talking about, planning, for such a long time."

"Oh, of course," I said, knowing what was to come next.

"How long I've waited for that day, with all our friends present and everything," she said, gazing off into space. "The ceremony, the reception. I was ready to pick out the prettiest dress. I really wanted you to be proud of your new bride."

I put my hands on her shoulders and squeezed her firmly. "If we can't find some way back home," I promised, "we'll still get married. Here, under the African sky. We'll have our own ceremony. It may be primitive, that I grant you. But you'll be as beautiful a bride to me as if you were dressed all in white."

Lynn pressed her body against mine.

Then I stepped back and looked at her. Even now, still wet from the waves, she was a goddess to behold, her golden hair shining magnificently under the sun. I looked toward the alcove where our raft was concealed and, smiling, she nodded.

Together, we entered the alcove and slowly collapsed together onto the hard floor. Seizing aside my rifle, I drew Lynn close to me, placing my arms around her damp body. For several minutes we kissed and held one another before the two of us slipped away into a much-needed sleep.

It was still daylight when we awoke.

Checking my wristwatch I noticed, for the first time since Lynn and I had arrived in this "lost world," that it had stopped - at about the same time that, last night, our plane experienced those inexplicable forces. Looking at Lynn's watch, I noted that hers

had also stopped at the same time as my own. There was no way to judge if we had been here for a full day or just hours. According to the sun's position, it was noon. Apparently we were not in a realm governed according to clocks and calendars. For all practical purposes, such "high-tech" methods of time keeping would not be invented for millions of years.

I removed my jacket and stashed it with the raft. After eating some of the rations we had brought from the plane, Lynn and I strode down the rocky slope and back onto the beach. The heat was much more severe than it was earlier. Removing my shirt, I felt that, if nothing more, this might be an opportune time to get the suntan of which I had been so long deprived after too much time spent locked away in the laboratory. Lynn, also feeling the effects of the heat, tied up the front ends of her white shirt, creating a halter top effect that bared her trim waist and stomach.

For the first time since arriving here, we finally found the time to scrutinize and evaluate our surroundings.

The beach stretched off almost as far as we could see. Some of this sandy area was marked by three-toed footprints of various sizes, tracks suggesting that flightless birds had recently used this beach as a highway. Based on what I knew of such things, I surmised that these tracks were not pressed into the sand by birds, but by some close relatives - theropods, or carnivorous dinosaurs. Fortunately for us, the track-makers were currently not using this stretch of sand as a walkway.

The beach gradually merged with the edge of the jungle, an entanglement of foliage that should have existed in some other age. I could identify a few of the types of plant life - palm trees, ginkgos, ferns, cycads. It was indeed a paleobotanist's paradise.

Until that moment, I had really not appreciated the verdant beauty of this uncharted land, so concerned was I over Lynn and my own survival, plus the fates of Abu and the Frankenstein Monster. Now, however, the splendor of this unpolluted world was unequivocally beyond description.

"Look," said Lynn, pointing off into the distance as we continued to walk along the beach.

Through the mists we could see the peaks of mountains, monoliths a beauty suggesting masterpieces sculpted by some timeless god. Even at this distance we could see that some of those geological wonders were actually the cones of active volcanoes, pumping gray smoke into the sky to merge and blend with

the mists.

Looking skyward, I felt a sensation of majesty. I could see, soaring through the mists and clouds on their leathery wings, a flock of pterosaurs, these apparently smaller than the one that had attacked our plane and lacking the backwardly directed crest.

The farther we walked the more animal life we beheld, all of it seen nowhere else on Earth, other than in a museum. A gigantic, long-necked dinosaur measuring possibly eighty feet in length – an *Apatosaurus* (as a child I called it “*Brontosaurus*”), judging from its great bulk and the size and shape of its head – passed us by, the ground almost shaking with every thunderous footstep. Although paleontology was not my precise field, my scientist’s heart could not help but pound fiercely at the sight of that exquisite animal. Thankfully such creatures, one of the sauropods, were vegetarians and posed a threat only if we happened to stand in their way. I draped my hand around Lynn’s waist, enjoying its firmness and warmth, as the dinosaur passed us by. Passing at a large clump of low-growing vegetation, the animal began to chomp, making a squeaking noise that belied the sauropod’s huge size.

And for the first time since being stranded here, the two of us laughed.

“It looks like we’re going to have some mighty interesting neighbors in this lost world of ours,” I told Lynn.

“Never a dull moment,” she added, “that’s for sure.”

“Luckily for us, animals like that *Apatosaurus* have little interest in food that moves,” I said. “At least that’s what the scientists tell us.”

“Scientists have been wrong before,” Doctor Winslow,<sup>10</sup> she said, staring hard at me.

“Ouch!” I said. “I could actually feel that insult.” “At least if I’m wrong this time, I’ve got my trusty old M-16 and plenty of ammo to correct my mistakes.”

“And when all that ammo runs out?” Lynn asked, cocking an eyebrow.

“Then,” I said, gesturing with my hands as I spoke, “it’s going to be ... ‘me Burt, you Lynn.’”

It was good to see Lynn’s face lighten up with her laughter.

## CHAPTER SIX

**T**he food we had brought with us from the Lear Jet would last us for at least several days, if we rationed it out. What we had

not yet eaten I hid away under the raft, hoping that it would not attract any of the hungry denizens of this lost world. However, I doubted that even animals with the keenest sense of smell would be able to sniff out the contents of our sealed tin cans.

Soon, I knew, Lynn and I would be out of food and have to secure it for ourselves, much in the way our ancestors had done many thousands of years ago. They, of course, would not have possessed such modern tools of hunting as Bowie knives and M-16 rifles. On the other hand, they were more experienced at hunting and gathering, their very existence depending upon it, and probably would have been equally adept at bringing down their prey armed only with hand axes and spears.

We soon learned that our lost world was abundant in game. The land beyond the cramped quarters of our cave was a veritable Eden in which an incredible menagerie of diverse creatures lived and made their daily living. Not all of the animals of this realm were reptilian, although we frequently spotted many with horns or shields or armor plates that made us wonder just what parts of them might actually be edible.

There were prehistoric mammals in this world, too, some of them not that different from those indigenous to our own world. When the time arose, I thought, it would be those hairy creatures that would become targets for my rifle. I was certain that a steak of giant ground sloth would be more appetizing than one cut from the shank of a thick-skinned horned dinosaur.

Indeed it was this great variety of species, belonging to so many diverse groups of animals, that got my scientist’s brain postulating. I knew that some of the animals we had observed, such as the giant sloths and those majestic mammoths, lived long after the last of the dinosaurs went extinct approximately sixty-five million years ago. I also knew that some of the Mesozoic reptiles we had encountered, such as the *Apatosaurus* and the *Elasmosaurus*, lived neither at the same time nor in the same place. Something beyond my own scientific knowledge – perhaps something related to the strange atmosphere that I had earlier detected, or that energy wave that struck our plane – had somehow preserved together in this lost world living creatures from different time periods and different places of origin. I could not even guess what other creatures – out of time and out of place – Lynn and I might meet during our life in this lost world. The conundrum would provide me with food for

thought during the long days and nights ahead.

“So,” I said to Lynn on one of our first mornings in our new dwelling in the rocks, checking my rifle to make certain it was loaded as I spoke, “what do you think of our new home?”

Lynn was looking around the small cave, the bare skin of her arms, waist and legs having more darkly tanned since its long exposure to the sun of this lost land. There was barely room enough in the place to harbor our raft and supplies, let alone two human beings used to the comforts of civilization.

“I think I might like a slightly larger living room,” she said, turning back to me with a toss of her long hair. “We won’t even begin to talk about the family ‘rec’ room.”

“Not to mention my personal library,” I said, laughing. “But at least this will serve as a storage facility for our things.” Slipping the stock of my rifle, I looked out the cave mouth and toward the beach. “There must be any number of good-sized caves out there, just for the taking. It may take some roughing it to find one that suits our needs – not to mention our personal tastes – but I’m sure we’ll find something that we’ll like, especially after you give it your own personal touch.”

“Making it ‘home sweet home’?”

I stepped up to her, gently brushing my hand across Lynn’s lovely face and pushing her mouth up into a little smile. When I took my hand away she was still smiling.

“But first,” I said, “I’m going to get us something for dinner tonight ... something a bit more tasty than canned beans.”

Turning, I felt Lynn’s hand grasp my shoulder.

“Wait,” she told me, “don’t think I’m going to stay at ‘home’ while you’re off maybe risking your life just for a potential meal. Not with all those animals, plant eaters or not, roaming about. If some of them wandered in this direction, and are as stupid as you say they are, maybe they’ll be too dumb to know that Lynn Powell is not a plant.”

“Touché,” I said, and we laughed together.

Then, the M-16 clutched dearly in my hands and a long length of rope over one shoulder, I strode outside and into the fresh air, a gorgeous woman whom I happened to love walking along with me.

We paused at a clearing in the jungle, a flat grassy stretch of land teeming with prehistoric

mammalian life. Huge, shaggy-haired ground sloths – *Megatherium*, I believe was their generic name – lumbered about under the hot early afternoon sun, their brownish coats shining in primeval majesty. We watched with fascination as they walked about on four muscular legs, chomping at the low-growing vegetation. Occasionally they reared up on their hind limbs, resting back for support on their short tails, to grasp the limbs of trees with their powerful forelimbs, pulling them down to get at the leaves which they licked with their long tongues.

Moving among the ground sloths were several armadillo-like glyptodonts. Their armor-capped heads kept low to the ground, browsing on the grass. All of this particular group of animals possessed tails seemingly consisting of rings of solid bone, and one had a tail ending in a mace-like array of bony spikes. I could well imagine the surprise that tail would elicit to some predator foolish enough to attempt attacking one of those living tanks.

Primitive primates of different species chattered from the treetops as the sloths and the glyptodonts continued to go about their mundane business. These apelike creatures seemed to be acting as “lookouts” for something – and it did not take much time to discover what they were watching out for, a large gray shape silently made their way across the clearing toward this idyllic tableau. We heard the low growl of a hungry carnivore, one sounding somewhat like a dog, only more deep-throated.

I motioned to Lynn to remain silent and to take cover. We hid behind a rock, peering over it to watch the primitive drama about to unfold before our modern eyes.

The primates scrambled to the highest branches of their trees as the snarling dire wolf – a canine whose remains, I remembered, were found in such great numbers in the “tar pits” at Rancho La Brea, in Los Angeles – quickly made its way to the top of another rock, its eyes trained upon one of the smaller of the ground sloths. Then, sinews bulging beneath the gray hair, the wolf leaped from the rock, its fanged mouth locking upon the larger mammal’s throat, releasing a gusher of blood.

The other sloths, seeing what was happening to their number, lumbered away as rapidly as their heavy bulks allowed them. The glyptodonts did not move, did in fact nothing, save for drawing their heads back into their shells, their armored caps closing these animals off from any danger.

Neither Lynn nor I did anything but watch

until the great carnivore finished its grisly but necessary work, gutting its much larger prey and then gorging upon the crimson-stained carcass. We waited until the canine had enjoyed its fill, and then sauntered off, no doubt to rest after devouring such a meal. Even as the dire wolf retreated into the distance, a half dozen shadows streaked across the clearing. We heard the beating of mighty wings, saw feathers drifting down from above, as the six giant vultures – *Teratornis* was the genus – swooped down, almost in formation, to claim the spoils left them by the killer of the sloth.

Again we waited.

When these prehistoric scavengers had finally eaten their fill, leaving behind mostly an exposed skeleton, they flapped back into the sky.

The birds gone, the other giant sloths, no longer in danger from the dire wolf, were already making their awkward way back to the clearing.

“Come on,” I told Lynn, stepping away from our hiding place, “I think we’re as safe now as we’ll ever be.”

Cautiously we walked toward the clearing, occupied now only by the glyptodonts and, in the trees above, the primates. As we approached the armadillo-like mammals, they poked out their heads, eyeing us with disinterest, then continued eating the low-growing vegetation.

Thankfully, no other carnivores, neither canine nor avian, had been attracted to the downed ground sloth. The plant-eating mammals seemed either unaware of our existence altogether or simply were unconcerned. As we walked boldly among these animals, I tried to select a suitable target.

“What do you plan to shoot at?” Lynn asked me. “I’d hate for you to aim at one of those sloths and not kill it, but just get it angry at us. You saw what those beasts can do with those arms. And we’re not built as sturdily one of those trees.”

“You’re right,” I said. “And with all that flesh and muscle to aim at, I wonder if a bullet or two, even from a rifle like this, will bring it down. One thing’s certain; I’m not wasting any precious ammunition on those glyptodonts.”

“What about that?” Lynn asked, motioning toward the sloth that the dire wolf had killed. “Maybe the wolf and those vultures left us enough to make a nice sandwich.”

I shook my head. “Even if they did, who knows what parasites, bacteria or disease-

causing organisms they might have brought in to contaminate that carcass? Anyway, there’s plenty of game around here.”

I reached out with my rifle, pointing out a mammal – smaller than the ground sloth -- that was grazing just a few hundred yards away from where we were standing. It was a tall, almost giraffe-like animal with long legs and a golden coat.

“There, that one should serve our purposes,” I said with a smile, “that is, if you don’t mind having camel for supper.”

Lynn’s face wrinkled appealing at the word camel. “You did say ‘camel,’ didn’t you?”

Again I nodded. “A kind of camel long extinct in the ‘real world.’ If I remember correctly, it’s called an *Alticamelus*, meaning ‘high camel,’ probably because of those legs. I know it doesn’t look much like the camels of our time, but...”

“And let’s be thankful for that,” Lynn said, chuckling. “I don’t think I could ever work up an appetite for one of those camels you’d see in Egypt.”

Raising my weapon, I advanced upon the animal, careful not to scare it with my presence. The camel’s long face appeared in the sights of my weapon, its dark nostrils widening as the mouth sought out the leaves of a nearby tree. The beast, a magnificent specimen of *Alticamelus*, possessed enough meat to last Lynn and me for days.

My finger eased back the trigger of the M-16.

The shot blasted through the air and the camel’s head jutted back from its impact. Instantly the surrounding area was alive with wildlife fleeing at the alien sound that had just invaded their world. I saw the thin legs of my target collapse. The camel no longer moved, but lay silent and still upon the grass.

“Come on!” I shouted, running toward my prey with Lynn hurrying behind me. “We eat well tonight!”

The two of us stood at the golden carcass, gazing down at our prize.

“Now all we have to do is get the meat to the cave,” I said. “It will be easier for us to butcher the meat here than drag back the whole animal. Once we get back we’ll have a nice meal and then, bright an early tomorrow morning, we’ll set out to look for that bigger cave.”

“At least you’re going to find out what kind of a cook you’re marrying,” Lynn said as she kept looking at the dead camel. “If I can cook that, I guess I can cook anything.”

“I guess you already know what kind of a

hunter you're marrying," I returned with pride.

We spent the next few hours hutchering the camel's carcass, our Bowie knives making the job somewhat easier than I had expected. Several times during our work I had to use my rifle to ward off the vultures or other flesh-eating animals aroused by the scent of blood and exposed flesh. After we had cut off enough meat to last us for a while, we bound the chunks together with rope, then dragged them across the plain, leaving the rest of our spoils for the scavengers. And as we continued on our way back toward the cave, we could hear their squawking and growling and chomping.

It was already dusk.

We started to build another fire for the mouth of our cave to give us some light in the impending darkness, warmth during the chilly night, and also, hopefully, to keep away predators. Luckily we still had a nice supply of matches and had not yet reverted to so primitive a state that were building our fires by striking two stones against each other. After gathering some dry wood and placing it into a rather neat pile, we set the wood ablaze.

Soon the scent of roast *Antilocapra* filled the cave. We feasted well that night, the most tasting to us like the finest cut of steak in one of the civilized world's finest restaurants. When dinner was over, we sat back away from the fire, leaning our backs against the hard lumpy wall.

"We've got a long day ahead of us tomorrow," I said, holding Lynn's hand. "Let's get a good night's sleep so we can start out fresh. And don't worry, that fire will keep us safe again, and whatever it can't handle, my M-16 can."

"You're right," she said, "I am pretty tired. Right now I'd probably even sleep through a visit by one of those ground sloths."

We did sleep well that night, even though my dreams were haunted by images of the Frankenstein Monster, old castles and dissecting tables. Even as I awoke my thoughts were on the Monster. That he was drowned and at the bottom of the lake, I was confident. Still, if only I could see his water-filled body, and if only I had not heard that stirring of chains just before Lynn and I had vacated the jet plane.

It was not, however, my dreams of the Frankenstein Monster that aroused me from my slumber, but a sound from outside – a slight sound, granted, yet one loud enough to disturb a light sleeper such as I was.

Lynn had not yet stirred from her sleep.

Grasping my rifle, I slowly moved past the fire and outside beneath the night sky. Although the moon was now only in its half stage, there was still ample light. Again I heard the sound, which seemed to originate in a clump of bushes some fifty feet away from the cave mouth. My heart beat more rapidly as I stepped closer to that mass of vegetation.

Once more came the sound.

Holding my weapon tighter, I took another step toward the bushes.

Anything could have been hiding in that brush. An animal the size of that dire wolf could easily conceal itself in that vegetation, or even some larger flesh-eating animal. I could imagine some much larger sabertoothed cat or cave lion, possibly even one of the smaller yet dangerous carnivorous dinosaurs, just waiting to sprint at its human prey. I could not risk that happening, especially with Lynn's life also at risk.

Without further thinking over the situation, I aimed the rifle at the bushes.

*Fired!*

I heard another noise, but not the sound of bushes being disturbed. The sound that followed my rifle shot was a masculine yell. Then I heard the sound of rapid footsteps, as if a man were running away.

During up to the bushes and searching the space behind them, I found nothing. The creature that had made those sounds – had my bullet seriously wounded it, or was my unseen target merely reacting to the sound of gunfire? – had already vanished into the night. I looked around but saw no traces of blood, although it was difficult to examine the bushes adequately in the moonlight.

"Burt," I heard Lynn say from behind me.

Turning around, I saw the blonde-haired beauty stepping up to the mouth of the cave, rubbing her eyes.

"I heard a shot," she said. "What was it, Burt? Another animal?"

Looking back toward the bushes, I replied, "We had some company tonight. And judging by the way it yelled and how it ran away, I'd say it almost could have been human."

So far, we had only encountered animal life in this lost world. There was yet another humanoid creature that I knew of in this world. But the Frankenstein Monster was at the bottom of the lake. The voice I had heard when I discharged my rifle was certainly not the Monster's. And, in all my days of knowing the brute, I had never known it capable of running as fast as the creature I

had encountered just moments ago. No, I told myself, whatever I shot at was not the creation of Frankenstein.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

I slept no more that night. Instead, I watched the entrance toward our cave, my hand resting upon the stock of my M-16, ready to blast the first moving object that might dare to violate our primitive domicile. The experience in the bushes still weighed heavily upon my mind and I feared that whatever it was that had been spying on us through the foliage might return, possibly not alone.

I was glad that Lynn managed to sleep well, despite what had so recently happened.

There were no further encounters that night with any mysterious visitors. Still, I could not have fallen asleep even if I had wanted to do so. Until that time I had no reason to suspect that Lynn and I were not the only human beings in this lost world. But that vocal sound that I heard when I shot my weapon was unquestionably human. Just *how* human – how far up the evolutionary scale leading to *Homo sapiens* – I could not even guess. Judging from the varied and unrelated animal forms inhabiting this questionable paradise, the unseen character in the bushes could have been – again, apparently due to the weird temporal forces permeating this region of the world – anything from the most primitive hominid to someone as physically modern as Lynn or myself.

The sun had barely risen above the horizon beyond the lake, when Lynn stood up and stretched her magnificent body, yawning quietly.

"You should have got more sleep," I told her. "We've probably got a long journey ahead of us, and I have no clue as to how long it will take us to find a better and bigger cave."

She blinked her eyes and smiled. "I'm getting used to getting up at sunrise," she said. "And I had a good night's sleep." Lynn stepped towards me, her hair catching the sunlight that was streaking into the cave. "Besides that, how can anyone sleep with such a loud and persistent 'wake-up call' to get me out of bed?"

I had not noticed it yet, but Lynn was right. The sounds of titanic prehistoric beasts – large dinosaurs, mammoths, animals we had not yet encountered – were already resounding across the landscape as if in some primal early-morning concert.

I stretched my limbs also.



"Well," I said to Lynn, stepping closer to her, then taking her in my arms, "I'm all ready to get a fresh start. But first, breakfast."

We relit the campfire, which I had replenished with wood throughout the night, but which had just gone out, and ate more of the camel meat. When we had eaten all that we required, we dragged whatever was left of the meat to the shore of the lake. If scavengers were to be attracted to it, better that they find it on the sand rather than inside our cave, where our raft and other supplies remained stored.

"Then," Lynn said, "shall we be off?"

Lynn and I trudged for miles that morning, not really knowing how far we walked. Wherever we went we saw examples of animal life that should not have existed for thousands, millions, tens or hundreds of millions of years. At all times we avoided the meat-eaters, whether they be saurian, avian or mammalian, anything with sharp teeth. The herbivorous animals either fled from us or tended to ignore us. No matter where we went did we detect any signs of anything even remotely resembling a human being or one of our not-too-distant ancestors.

In some places that we journeyed, the earth was like a series of canals. Great fissures, apparently the telltale results of ancient earthquakes, trailed off into the distance. In some places we had to jump over these fissures or climb down and out again in order to continue our trek.

"I wish we had some plan as to where we're going," said Lynn.

I wish I had some definite answer. Instead, I pointed toward the mountains.

"There," I told her, "I know it's a long way, but I wouldn't be surprised to find a nice cave in at least one of those. But cheer up. We're both in very good company, so I doubt the walk will be boring."

And we continued our journey.

The temperature was hot as it had been every day since our arrival here in the lost world, the sun bearing down, gradually darkening our skins to a golden brown. Lynn looked especially fetching, her bared and tanned skin contrasting gorgeously against her flowing golden hair.

At last, our legs tired, our eyes still not perceiving anything resembling a cave better than the one we already possessed, we came upon a ridge of jagged rock. Knowing what we had left behind, we determined to press onward. Scaling that barrier of stone would be difficult and tiresome, but surely not

impossible. Rather than ascend the entire thing, we decided to climb around the ridge, making our way up only a few hundred yards.

"Do you think you can make it?" Lynn asked me, cocking an eyebrow as she continued to climb ahead of me.

"Very funny, Ms. Powell," I returned, also raising an eyebrow.

Lynn reached our present destination first, leading me by the hand. The two of us stood beside one another on a narrow rocky ridge, our grips never tighter, our backs pressed against the rugged stone wall. A slip now would have meant our deaths in the canyon below, our bodies quickly attracting the scavengers. Eventually reaching a wider and flatter place to stand, we finally had an opportunity to appreciate the wonders spread out before us.

A herd of large horned dinosaurs – *Triceratops*, they appeared to me, distinguished by the short nasal horn and the long horns over the eyes, plus the saddle-like frill that extended beyond its neck – lumbered about the canyon, most of them cropping off vegetation in their beaked mouths and chomping it with their obviously powerful jaws. Over to one side were numerous clutches of eggs, each of them set into a nest that had been dug into the ground.

In one spot, two large bulls were engaged in a shoving match, their horns and frills almost locked together, as they tussled and shoved and snorted for the "affections" of an observing female. Neither of these males seemed intent on causing the other either much harm or damage, but they did provide Lynn and me with a spectacular show.

"You know," I said, marveling at this display of animal life, "I'd seen pictures of these ceratopians in books, seen their skeleton in museums, but I never dreamed that they'd be so..."

"Cera-top-sians?" she asked, looking toward me.

"Horned dinosaurs," I informed her. "Some members of that group, like those *Triceratops*, were among the last dinosaurian genera to die out. At least die out in the 'real world,' not in a place like this where time seems to have gone berserk."

"And these dinosaurs are also plant-eaters?"

"You bet," I said with a laugh. "You can tell by their beaks and teeth. Also, that's mostly all they seem to be doing down there – eating plants."

"They certainly aren't the most appealing-looking creatures," said Lynn, "with those

horns and everything."

"Beauty, as they say, is in the eye of the beholder. I'm sure to a paleontologist those creatures would look as gorgeous as a beauty contest winner."

As I spoke, one of the horned dinosaurs – an old *Triceratops* bull that looked like it could have measured more than twenty feet long – plodded along, snorting as it ate its way through a clump of foliage.

"Look at that big fellow," I said, indicating the animal with my rifle barrel. "If one of my bullets could penetrate that thick skull and find its way into that tiny brain, we could eat for a month. That is, unless the vultures got to it before we found a refrigerator around here."

"Somehow," she said, "I think I'd get tired of roast...cerra-top-sian?...long before that."

The bull was such a perfect specimen that we were compelled to study its movements. The dinosaur thundered away from most of the other members of its herd, making its way toward a clear place in the canyon. At the opposite end of the canyon were more fissures, one of which was situated directly in the animal's path.

As the reptilian brute continued moving in the same direction, the surrounding area suddenly exploded with a cacophony of what sounded like human voices.

Quickly that area of the canyon was filled with numerous creatures, rushing in toward the *Triceratops* from all sides, that for all practical purposes seemed to be human beings. Despite the great distance separating this group from us, we could see that these beings, all of them teenagers to adult males, were definitely not apes or some other closely related species of primitive primate. They were clothed in loincloths and other tunics made from what were plainly the hides of animals. Only intelligent beings were clothing, I knew, and these were clearly not apes.

Cautiously, we took concealment behind some rocks.

"Burt, what are they?" asked Lynn, watching the beings as they almost danced, hooting and yelling, around the slow-walking *Triceratops*. "Are they human?"

"Yes," I said, fascinated at what I was watching. "From here I'd guess that those are Neandertals, or, as they were once called, 'Neanderthals.'"

"Are those ... our ancestors?" she said, frowning.

"Scientists once thought so," I said, trying to remember what I had recently heard on a television documentary about early man.

"Now they believe that Neandertal..." I said the word slowly to pronounce it correctly, sans the "h," "man was not an ancestor of modern man, but rather a separate human species that went extinct thousands of years ago, leaving the world for our species. Anthropologists believe that they were actually very intelligent, even had a sense of an afterlife, despite their rather brutish appearances."

"You could have fooled me," said Lynn.

The Neandertals were still moving frantically about the *Triceratops*. They waved their primitive weapons – spears and stone-headed axes – above their heads, at the same time making the most blood-freezing vocal noises, hollering and shrieking like banshees at the possibly bewildered dinosaur. I wondered if these beings, smart enough to make such sophisticated weapons, possessed a language beyond the grunting and other noises we were currently hearing.

Obviously these ancient human beings had some kind of plan. Careful not to get too near the hulking animal, especially to its horns, the "cavemen" prodded the animal with their spears and swatted its shanks with their axes. Their attacks proved negligible, for the animal had not yet attempted to attack or even defend itself against their relentless assault.

"Why are they doing that?" asked Lynn. "Are they that stupid that they don't realize that sooner or later that monster is going to get mad – and fight back? Can't they see that they're not even making a dent in that creature's hide with those puny weapons of theirs?"

"Agreed about not doing any damage," I said, noting that the dinosaur, though unharmed by the Neandertal's attack, was starting to move along in the direction of that fissure. "But maybe they're not trying to. Let's watch and see what happens."

By that time, the homed juggernaut had increased its pace, moving its bulk away from the persistent Neandertals much in the same way a human being might vacate an area infested with insects.

Looking beyond the walking dinosaurs and the yelling and shrieking entourage prompting it to move along, I finally realized their plan. Indeed these were quite intelligent beings, pitting more their brains than their weapons against this ancient adversary.

By now, the deep earth fissure was a mere twenty or less yards away from the ambulating ceratopsian dinosaur. At the far side of the fissure, piled almost nearly atop one another, were many boulders. I

wondered: Had these fur-clad early humans prepared for this encounter with the *Triceratops*? Had they, in fact, set up those big rocks previously in preparation for the event Lynn and I were now witnessing?

Within a minute, the dinosaur was at the near side of the fissure. The animal halted abruptly, then thumped a forefoot at the rocky edge. No doubt, this was a stupid animal; but even it was smart enough not to take the next step that would send it falling down into that deep hole in the ground.

Less than thirty seconds later, the Neandertals were putting the next stage of their "plan" into effect. Their shouting continuing, they slammed their weapons with increased vehemence into the dinosaur's hide. By the way the giant reptile turned, honking as the beaked mouth snapped at their crude weapons, I could see that the Neandertals were attempting to anger and upset the animal, and succeeding admirably in that task.

"Hmmm," observed Lynn, "they may not be as dumb as they look."

We saw the *Triceratops* make an unsuccessful attempt to attack the men with its horns and beaks, but accomplished no more than disorienting itself at the crevasse's edge. Although the Stone Age weapons had not yet even broken through its hide, the animal was in the power and under the control of its attackers. I questioned if these hunters were even trying to cut through that tough skin. The more the feet attempted to move and regain their stance, the more they began to slip and slide and stumble. Gradually the creature's mass began to inch over the edge of the fissure, its hindquarters starting to topple the animal toward that yawning opening in the ground.

The ceratopsian made one final and quite valiant effort to remain on the ground, but its own mass and weight proved to be its worse



enemy. Roaring with attempted defiance at this band of jeering, primitive hunters, the *Triceratops* slipped, plunging what must have been almost a hundred feet into the fissure below.

"Indeed, they are smarter than they look," I said, watching as the Neandertals then hurried toward the accumulation of boulders.

The *Triceratops*, utterly trapped at the bottom of the fissure, could do no more than gaze up at the tiny creatures that had caused its predicament and roar at them.

What happened next proved fascinating to watch. The Neandertals pressed their weight and exerted their strength, muscles rippling, against the heavy rocks, some of them using their spears and axes as levers. Within seconds the boulders began to move, slide, tumble down toward the trapped dinosaur. The animal snorted and bellowed as the huge rocks came down, its dense skull rapidly buried under this mini-avalanche, the boulders cracking and breaking off some of the small bony processes decorating its frill. In an attempt to free itself from the descending boulders, the enormous head jerked from side to side. Yet the more the

animal moved, the more boulders banged against its snout and frill.

Soon, the last boulder shoved into the crevasse, the dinosaur was sufficiently beneath the rubble.

Quickly and efficiently, the hunters hurried down into the fissure, gingerly approaching the still-living and quite angry *Triceratops*. Even as the animal squirmed and honked, in a last attempt at freeing itself, the "cavemen" went to work, hacking away with all their might at the thick hide, literally butchering the animal alive! I knew that, once the red meat was stripped from the animal's bones, these hunters' tribe would not have to worry about lunch and dinner for a long while to come.

We continued to watch, careful not to be seen ourselves, until the last hunter had taken his share of *Triceratops* meat away and carried it up to ground level. And we observed as several of the more powerfully built men used their weapons to cut through the flesh and muscle bone of the dinosaur's neck, severing the giant head and taking that also, probably as a totem or trophy, perhaps for some religious purpose.

Lynn and I were truly amazed by this display of prehistoric hunting skills. But our amazement would prove to be our undoing. As we continued to watch the Neandertals below, we became less concerned with maintaining our "low profile" on the ridge and, inadvertently, relaxed our guard. We never heard the sound of bare feet padding behind us against the rocks.

From behind us, finally, there came a loud and defiant growl.

We turned simultaneously. Lynn gasped, suppressing a scream it seemed, and I clutched tightly my M-16. A group of Neandertals, a dozen of them, was already rushing toward us along the rocks. I shuddered as I noted the hateful look in their very human eyes. Their muscles bulged and strained and I could smell their sweat.

Some of them yelled at us, showing yellowed teeth, mouthing sounds that might have been primitive words. Their bodies smelled, reminding me of some of the zoo animal houses I had visited in my early youth. I could see that the attention of these savages was more on Lynn than upon myself.

"Lynn," I said, "use your knife if you must!"

Horror overwhelmed me, for, although I could not bring myself to mouth the words explicitly, my meaning was, I thought, quite clear. Lynn should use her Bowie knife on

herself rather than be taken by these brutes.

I saw Lynn, her knife flashing in the sunlight, take a few steps backwards, at the same time careful not to slip off the ridge and into the canyon.

Aiming my rifle, I fired. One of the approaching brutes dropped, his chest bleeding.

Surprisingly, the other Neandertals reacted rather nonchalantly to their fallen comrade and to the "mysterious" weapon that had taken his life. There was no time to fire a second round. For in the next moment, strong hands tore the rifle from my hands and hurled it into the canyon. Then those same hands rushed at me

Unable to reach my Bowie knife in time, I had to resort to brute strength, but there were too many Neandertals, too much brute strength to deal with, to fight them all. Pain attacked and I started to fall as they pummeled me relentlessly from all sides.

"Burt!" I heard Lynn's voice.

Turning, I witnessed my worst fears actualized. Another group of Neandertals were assaulting Lynn, fingering her blonde hair, pawing at her clothes, her body. Though my vision was rapidly blurring, and as I continued to fight with all my strength and energy, I could see what those wretched creatures were doing to the woman I loved. I saw them grab at her clothing, heard that ghastly rip as her white shirt was torn off her body, exposing her full breasts, revealing probably the most beautiful and perfect female figure these savages had ever beheld.

"Lynn --!" I exclaimed.

But I was beyond helping myself, let alone her. I glimpsed her, struggling, kicking to no avail, as she was taken away and out of my field of vision.

The realization of what had just happened was overwhelming. I had failed to save my beloved. In just moments, I would fail to save myself, also, making any rescue attempt of Lynn impossible. Cursing, I made one last attempt to break free of these foul-smelling savages, succeeding at no more than making them angrier and attacking me more fiercely. Suddenly I felt myself lifted high as the Neandertals continued to jabber away. Held high above their heads in their powerful hands, I was entirely at their mercy -- a human quality that these brutes apparently did not even understand.

They carried me to the edge of the ridge. They stopped only long enough to stare down into the canyon. Looking down I could see the canyon floor, seeing the array of jagged

stones just waiting to claim my life. The image of a bloody death, being mangled against those stones, flashed into my imagination.

I squirmed, making one final attempt to break free of the Neandertals' hold, but failed miserably.

Then the muscular arms of the men holding me did their work, hurling me down off the side of the ridge as my body slammed hard against the ground, continuing to bounce and roll toward the stones waiting to impale me.

My last thoughts, during that painful descent, were of Lynn being forced away, naked and subject to the savage lusts of her captors.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

The Neandertals were still yelling as my body tumbled down the rocky slope, eventually arriving in the basin of the canyon. Miraculously I was still alive, although I probably would not have been had the slope been just slightly steeper. I felt my body go limp as it finally came to rest.

For several minutes I did not move, lying as if dead beneath the hot sun. Not only was movement, at that time, a somewhat painful activity, given the beating and bruising my body had taken during its descent into the canyon, but there were also my new foes to consider. As long as the Neandertals believed me to be dead, I reasoned, the less chance there would be of their coming down into the canyon, with their spears and stone-headed axes, to make certain. I detected no other Neandertals down in the basin itself and assumed, therefore, that the rest of the group had already joined their comrades above on the ridge.

My body ached in every conceivable place. I could only imagine the many wounds I must have acquired during my tumble into the basin. And I could still feel the aches where the Neandertals' fists and weapons had collided with my skin.

Above me, the voices of those prehistoric humans were finally dying away, to be replaced by the honking and snorting of the nearby *Triceratops* herd.

Soon my "playing dead" ruse proved successful. The voices of the Neandertals gradually faded away entirely and, taking a chance, I turned my head and looked up to see that they had, in fact, left the area, no doubt anxious to return home, not only with their new supply of *Triceratops* meat, but also with their beautiful, golden-haired prize.

Lynn! The thought of her in the company of those savages enflamed me for a primitive lust to kill as great as any I had ever felt for the Frankenstein Monster. If I could trail them, perhaps I could rescue my loved one before her captors harmed her in any way, physical or emotional. Standing, my limbs hurting and bleeding, I looked up toward the ridge, seeing that it was totally devoid of any life.

I stretched my limbs, which stung from countless bleeding wounds. My clothing was in tatters, shredded by the sharp edges of stone that comprised the surface of the basin's slope. Salvaging what was left of my trousers, I hastily fashioned them into something resembling a loincloth.

Spotting my rifle lying about a hundred feet away, I staggered over to it and examined it, finding it to be smashed beyond any use or repair. Luckily the Neandertals had not stripped me of my Bowie knife, which was still resting against my left hip, snugly thrust into its leather sheath. Also, though the M-16 was now no more than scrap, I retained possession of its supply of bullets, which might, I thought, have some future use.

In that moment I felt completely removed from the Twenty-first Century, a man approaching in primitiveness that of the people who had hurled me into this canyon. No longer in the possession of firepower, armed only with a knife and almost naked, I was indeed like a man of the Stone Age.

In a way my present situation was not entirely unanticipated. I knew from the start that, unless by some miracle Lynn and I were removed from this lost world, my ammunition would not last forever and we would have to learn to survive in this primitive and hostile environment without the luxury of modern weaponry. I just did not expect to be thrust into such a predicament this soon!

Within just minutes my entire sense of values had been altered. No longer would I, as had been the case in the past, be able to attempt reasoning with my enemies. All human foes existing in this lost world would belong to primitive species whose language, if they even had one, were unknown to me. Based on my recent experience with the Neandertals, I realized that any foes I would encounter, whether man, beast or some combination of both, would slay me without the slightest thought or hesitation. To survive them, I too would have to kill first or be killed. To stay alive I must kill, to eat I must kill, and if I ever hoped to save Lynn Powell from that tribe of savages, I must also kill.

I kept telling myself that a chance yet

existed that Lynn still lived and had not yet been violated by those brutes. I told myself that again and again. Perhaps in her mind and heart was the hope that I would somehow find her and help her get free of the Neandertals, and maybe that hope would keep her going and maintain her sanity. One thing was certain: My only goal in life, now that the Frankenstein Monster was no longer an issue, was to find Lynn, a quest I would not terminate until I knew conclusively her fate.

With Lynn's lovely image in my thoughts and giving my strength a much-needed boost, I started my climb up the sloping wall of the canyon, the rocks proving excellent hand- and footholds for my ascent. Although the slope became steeper the higher I climbed, I managed to maintain my grip on the curved wall of stone. Behind, above and below me I occasionally heard the shriek or growl of some animal, and I kept hoping I would make it to the top before satisfying the hunger of some flying or climbing predator.

Had it not been for my determination to save Lynn, completing this climb would have been impossible. Although my wounds were beginning to dry, I was weak from the loss of much blood and my body was still wracked by pain. Relentlessly I continued my ascent up the slope, miraculously unbothered by pesky meat-eating animals, until my hands finally gripped the rugged edge of the ridge. Groaning, I pulled myself up over the ridge and back onto solid high ground.

I breathed deeply, both from exhaustion and relief, invigorated by the pure atmosphere.

Looking around, I detected no sign of the Neandertals. The rocky surface of the ridge preserved no footprints and, therefore, no indication of the direction in which the "cavemen" had gone. Eyes straining, I gazed out in all directions, trying to determine which way the Neandertals might have gone. In one direction, a distant scene, wavering visually in the heat, I could see the mostly rocky terrain gradually merge into a vast expanse of green. Approaching that green area I could see, through the haze, what appeared to be a low-sitting cloud of smoke or dust, through which were numerous moving forms. What I could have been observing was the Neandertal hunting party on their way back to their tribe, stirring up dust as they marched home with their spoils. Was Lynn among them?

Moving as fast as my bruises and wounds permitted me, I made my way across the flat area, my shoes – among the few modern items this "modern cavemen" yet possessed –

also stirring up dust. Certain that I was headed in the right direction, I pressed onward.

The green area was, as I had suspected, a lush prairie, rich in vegetation, much of which was extinct in the world I had left behind. Small reptiles and mammals dashed about and away from me as I continued on my way. For the present, I had thankfully only encountered dinosaurs that were less than half my size and preferring plant life or insects to *Homo sapiens*.

The ground here was rather moist and, in most places, covered with grass or other kinds of vegetation. On this terrain the footprints of the people I was pursuing were plain and in great numbers. There was no longer any speculation as to which direction the Neandertals – and presumably Lynn – were headed. The sun was already beginning its afternoon descent as the tracks led me across the plain to yet another stark strip of barren ground. Again there were no sign of any footprints.

Tired and in desperation, I sat down on a warm rock, in an attempt to regain some breath and also to assess my present situation. My gaze went out to the land waiting ahead of me, the next domain for this once modern-day human being to conquer. Most of what I could perceive seemed to be made of stone. Mountain ranges, a couple of them volcanic, awaited me in the distance, an entire world inhabited by primitive humans and beasts. But what made me determined to continue on my journey was the knowledge that Lynn was somewhere out there. No matter what happened in my quest, I had to keep convincing myself that she was still alive and not damaged by her captors.

By now my hunger was returning. The long walk across the prairie had burnt up a lot of energy and I knew that, if I did not satisfy my hunger soon, I might not have the strength to resume my trek across this lost land. I slapped the sheath on my hip, feeling the reassuring bulge of the Bowie knife it contained. It was a dependable weapon. But I knew I would need something else – something that, if not taking its place, would at least compensate in some small way for the loss of my M-16 – if I were to continue surviving in this primitive world.

Taking a hint from those Neandertals, I decided that a spear would suffice, a weapon I would have to build on my own. Immediately I started to search for a shaft of wood of the appropriate size and straightness. That quickly being found, I cut off one end with my Bowie knife, whittling it down to a

suitable length. Next, I cut a slot into one end of the shaft. Into that slot would go my spearhead, once I found and prepared one of those.

Finding my spearhead proved to be as simple a task as selecting the shaft of wood. Stones of every conceivable size and shape lay scattered about the rocky terrain. Spotting an oval chunk of rock several times bigger than my fist, I used another stone to cut away at its edges, reshaping it into a recognizable point. Then, again using a second stone as a tool, I sharpened the edges of my spearhead enough to cut through even a modest-sized dinosaur's tough epidermis.

My stone creation completed, I fit it snugly into the slot at the end of the wooden shaft, then bound it firmly into place with some of the rope I had salvaged from the airplane. I had my spear and held it proudly. The weight of the weapon felt reassuring in my right hand. Indeed, I experienced the greatest sense of security, even power, that I had since last being in possession of my M-16.

I practiced for more than what I judged to be an hour – without a working clock it was difficult estimating the time – hurling my spear until I became somewhat adept at hitting a target. Learning to throw a javelin back in my college days aided me in my getting familiar with this primitive weapon. It was not long before I was hitting virtually every target (albeit stationary ones) that I selected.

During that practice time my hunger increased and a growl from my stomach seemed to mimic that of some distant prehistoric beast. To date – except for some alligator I had once sampled in New Orleans, and even the taste of that was heavily buried in some kind of Cajun sauce – I had not eaten reptile. But I was not now in any position to turn down a meal of dinosaur or pterosaur based upon my own tastes or previous experiences. Also, the sun was now lower in the sky and night was not that far away. Best, I thought, to spear my dinner now while I could still clearly see my target, and before any potential prey retired for the night.

Selecting a prey item was not difficult in a world so abundant in animal life. Within what I felt was no more than fifteen minutes, a more-or-less man-sized, bipedal dinosaur resembling an ostrich – a *Struthiomimus* or related genus, I recalled from my readings, based on its long neck and tiny, beaked head – bolted toward me on long legs, its speed impressive. The dinosaur did not seem to be headed toward me as much as passed

me and, as it approached, I could see that its toothless mouth was snapping at flying insects as it continued on its way. In overall appearance, the animal looked to me like a harmless creature, but its bulging thighs told me that it could provide more than one meal if I brought it down.

The *Struthiomimus* was almost upon me.

With a pride that must have equaled that of the inventor of the first spear, I – Dr. Burt Winslow, Twenty-first Century scientist, clad like a savage and with my hair hanging over my brow – took a classic hunter's stance and raised my newly built weapon. My fingers tightened on the rugged wood and I could feel the sweat of my fingers and palm against the shaft.

The dinosaur's beak snapped at me as it started to pass me by, a birdlike squawk/issuing from the mouth.

I hurled the spear.

But the dinosaur was too swift, passing me by as the spear whizzed behind its hindquarters to drop unceremoniously to the ground. My aim had been good, granted, but there was still much practicing ahead of me before I would hit such a swiftly moving target.

Already the *Struthiomimus* was out of my range as I retrieved my weapon.

My prey had evaded me. Yet I was still hungry, and my futile attempt at killing the ostrich dinosaur had consumed valuable time. I needed to make some kind of decision regarding food and do it fast. The slower moving dinosaurs that I had seen were either too large or too heavily armored even to be bothered by my relatively puny weapon, nature having compensated for those animals' lack of speed.

Exploring my present environs a bit, I found a stream, its colorful waters reflecting the images of that ever-descending sun. Fruits and vegetable of many kinds, most of which were unknown to my modern-day eyes, grew alongside the stream. They would have to sustain me until, the next morning, when I again attempted bringing down some wild game.

Eagerly I rushed up to the stream. Setting my spear aside on the muddy bank, I began to cut my fill of whatever appeared

to me as edible. Although what I ate appeared sometimes alien to me, they tasted good and filled my stomach.

No longer hungry, I knelt down on the bank and drank my fill of the pure stream water. The cool liquid had a thrilling effect as it entered my body. Just then, the water seemed to freeze inside of me, as did my blood.

For, as I drank, I heard from behind me a sound resembling the snarl of some jungle cat of Africa or India, but a cat larger and more ferocious than I had ever known before. Moving with the most extreme caution, I slowly turned, my body still in a kneeling position. My every muscle tensed as I beheld the great, golden-furred creature stalking toward me.

Moving in my direction, on padded feet terminating in formidable, curved claws, was the most dangerous of known predators of the long-passed Ice Age, a huge, short-tailed cat whose main weapon was a pair of elongated, curved canine fangs! It was a *Smilodon*, the so-called sabertoothed cat, its foot-long teeth gleaming in the sunlight like twin daggers. Its green eyes blazing, the monster sniffed as it approached, its black nose twitching.

Every silent step brought the giant cat closer to its human prey.

Instinctively I grabbed for my spear, finding that it was still where I had left it, a



good half-foot or more beyond my grasp. There was no longer any time to reach the weapon. Any sudden movement on my part might incite the hungry predator to make its attack even sooner.

There was no time to make any kind of decision.

The sabertoothed cat stopped and crouched on its sinewy haunches, its muscles rippling under the golden fur. The mouth, saliva dripping from its saber-fangs, opened wider.

Then the cat leaped!

I felt my skin erupt as the tearing claws and pouncing weight of the animal plinned me down against the mud, and the saber-teeth pressed against my throat.

## CHAPTER NINE

Even though I knew I could not reach my spear, I made a last try. Never before had I experienced such a feeling of doom as those feline claws tore at me. I heard my clothing rip and shred as the sharp nails did their work. In another moment those saber-like fangs would be tearing through my flesh.

Desperately pitting all of my strength against the *Sulodon*, I reacted on sheer instinct, tearing into the beast's hairy neck with my fingernails. Compared to the savage ferocity of this animal, my human prowess was indeed puny. There was no way I could hold the great cat back.

There was one hope, at best a slim one, I thought, even as I smelled the beast's hot breath in my face. Already my left hand was working its way toward my left hip. I grasped the handle of my Bowie knife, yanking the one modern weapon I yet possessed from its sheath. And in a blur of movement, I thrust its highly sharpened blade – my own “sabertooth” – into the most accessible target, the carnivore's side.

A deafening growl of pain and anger erupted from the mouth of the sabertoothed cat, as a river of blood issued from its side. I withdrew the blade, hoping to get a second strike in a more critical part of the creature's anatomy. I had not yet even approached killing the animal, but the pain I had just inflicted upon the cat prompted it to relax – affording me the opportunity to slip out from under that heavy mass of muscle and golden fur and, bloodied knife in hand, regain my stance.

My eyes briefly shifting to one side, I saw the spear that I had carelessly left on the bank of the stream. That weapon was still beyond my reach and, even if I moved at my fastest

speed, the angry beast would bring me down before my hand ever touched its wooden shaft. Still, my Bowie knife was my only defense against the feline horror.

Standing tall and motionless, gripping tightly my man-made “fang,” I waited for the *Sulodon* to make its next move.

Its golden side marred by a patch of glistening wet scarlet, the cat eyed me for several protracted moments, obviously knowing that I was the cause of its discomfort. No doubt the beast had had its encounters with men before, yet never one armed with a sabertooth matching, no even surpassing, its own.

The sabertoothed cat advanced for a second attack.

My grip on the Bowie knife tightened.

Then, a deep-throated hungry growl issuing from its wide-open mouth, the animal took another step toward me, performing an incredible leap!

In that instant, I raised my knife. As the mass of fang and fur flashed upon me, the beast's own weight and inertia did their work, impaling the animal on the blade, forcing it deeply into its throat. Another roar of pain bellowed from the sabertoothed cat's mouth, accompanied by a flood of crimson that splashed against my face and chest. Even with the beast's mass pressing against me, forcing me again against the wet sand, I twisted the knife, trying to create a maximum of internal damage.

Feeling the feline body start to relax, I once more slipped out from beneath it, at the same time extracting the crimson-dripping weapon. The animal was in great agony, staggering about the bank of the stream. There was no way to tell how long the animal would live. Yet this I did know: I had caused that pain and the beast, acting upon the natural instinct of his kind, had put up a good and noble fight. It was only fitting that I end his discomfort now in the quickest and most humane way I knew how.

Quickly retrieving my spear, I approached that magnificent predator and thrust its point deeply into its feline heart. Moments later, making one last snarl, the reddened warrior mercifully crumpled into a peaceful heap.

Again, as in millennia past, man had conquered the beast.

I withdrew my spear from the motionless body. Standing over my kill, exhausted and still not fully recovered from my earlier fall, I stepped away from the carcass of the sabertoothed cat. I looked down at the still bloody knife that I was holding, then back at

the mighty killer that I had vanquished. A sudden rush of accomplishment and pride overwhelmed me. Indeed, in that instant I felt like the true master of this lost world, the King of all living beings, whether two-legged or four-legged or even no-legged. And in that moment I – a civilized man educated in the world's most prestigious schools and who had once been so at home in the upper echelons of society – felt a sudden urge to roar and bellow my triumph to this primitive realm.

Rather than make any vocal sounds that might make me appear to be some kind of human ape, I slowly walked up to the stream. Crouching and looking down into the slowly moving waters, I beheld my reflection, perceiving a bloodied savage staring back at me. Without hesitation, I stepped into the stream, splashing the cool and invigorating liquid all over my body, washing away the scarlet traces of my recent encounters with potential death. It was not long before the water began to do its curative work, healing my wounds and restoring my strength. When I stepped back onto the shore I felt as if I had been reborn – a new man baptized by both blood and water, ready to face without fear or hesitation the myriad threats of this ancient world.

Boldly, I – the “mighty hunter and warrior” – walked away from the stream and to the edge of the green, surveying the ruggedly hewn world that awaited me. The walls of rock that loomed in the distance had dark areas that I interpreted to be possible caves. Night, with all its new uncertainties and dangers, would be here soon and continuing my quest to find Lynn in the dark would almost surely prove futile. Also, I was in desperate need of rest, my recent violent encounters having taken their toll on my body and spirit. Surely I needed to find some safe place, like a cave, to spend the night.

The sun already nearing the horizon, I used my Bowie knife to cut through the coat of the dead sabertoothed cat, hastily fashioning some of its hide and skin into a loincloth to replace my shredded clothing. The only things “modern” about my apparel now were my socks and shoes that, I knew, would not last forever. I cut some of the animal's muscle tissue into small chunks which, again using the rope I had brought along with me, I strapped to my back for tonight's dinner and tomorrow's breakfast and lunch. Then I set off to find myself a cave.

It was dusk when I came across a cave I deemed suitable for the night. Here I would remain, resting up and regaining my energy

and strength, only until sunrise. With the first light of dawn I would be off again on my rescue quest to save my beloved Lynn.

As the sky darkened to an infinite sea of countless stars, lit only by a half moon, I stood just outside the cave's mouth and assessed my present situation. Lynn, of course, was the top priority in my mind, and she was in the clutches of those primitive men. I had a general idea of where the Neandertals had gone and I thought it most logical to continue in that direction, assuming that they were all headed toward the same destination. Once I did find them, a much bigger problem would arise for me to deal with – what could I, just one man armed with a spear and a knife, do against an entire tribe of warriors who were accustomed to killing without question?

Looking about the cave, I noted its size. Big enough to accommodate a mastodon for the night, I figured.

My first order of business, after setting down my stash of *Smilodon* meat, was to make another fire. This time, however, I was denied the luxury of matches, my last remaining few having been lost along with my clothing during the sabertoothed cat's destructive attack. Having become a primitive man, I now had to rely upon primitive technology if I were to have a fire for the night.

Without delay I gathered together some sticks. Remembering my childhood days as a Boy Scout, I quickly searched the cave, which was littered with various kinds of stone. I found two pieces that, although hidden by the darkness, felt to me like they might have been flint. As I had never really made a fire before in this manner, it required numerous false starts before I produced my first spark. Repeating this action with growing success, I finally ignited my small assemblage of wooden pieces. Blowing upon the sticks, I watched with triumph as a flame swelled into view. I had my fire.

Cooking and then eating some of the *Smilodon* meat, I stretched out my weary and still aching body against a wall further back in the cave.

The world outside of the cave was alive and menacing with the sounds of countless nocturnal animals.

How I needed sleep! But my eyes refused to remain closed long enough for me to doze off completely. They kept watching the play of shadows against the craggy cave wall, shadows created by rocks near the fire, shadows that wavered and took on impossible new forms with every crackling flame, other

shadows cast by the moonlight.

Then, still fascinated by those morphing black images, my eyes seemed almost to fall from the sockets.

Against that wall of stone, among the shadows cast in the moonlight, was the unmistakable dark form of a human hand – an apparently gigantic hand, with long, slowly moving fingers. Where the hand joined to the wrist was what appeared to be the torn sleeve of a modern coat or jacket. The shadow moving again, I perceived an enormous shoulder.

Acting on pure instinct, I seized my spear, as feelings of dread and horror overwhelmed me.

That shadow had the most terrible significance for me. I had seen it before, too many times, in Germany...in England.

The shadow of the Frankenstein Monster!

That was impossible, I wanted to believe. The Monster was finally dead, its man-made body drowned inside an airplane now lying at the bottom of that lake. But I had been certain of the giant's death in the past, only to learn that it had somehow cheated the Grim Reaper. Yet the spark of life that Victor Frankenstein had infused in the Monster, more than two centuries ago, was an unnatural one. The beast had already survived freezing and quicksand and other hazards that would have claimed the life of a mortal being. No doubt the Monster had somehow managed to free itself from the drowned Lear Jet, then survive both the waters and their aquatic denizens.

I had to remind myself again: The only certain way to ensure the Frankenstein Monster's death was dissection.

Silently, stealthily, all the while standing near the campfire, I looked around the cave. The Monster feared fire, I knew, and thought it best, if the beast really were the agent of that shadow, to keep close to its protecting flames.

The shadows, at least those that reminded me of the Monster, were no longer there. Had they been just my imagination? Had I, in fact, actually dozed off and dreamt of the Monster – a very realistic nightmare that had merged, as dreams so often do, with the reality experienced upon first opening my eyes? Or had I simply seen a shadow that was never really on that wall?

Again I sat down, my eyelids feeling heavier.

Once again an awesome shadow crept across that same patch of wall. Again I clutched my spear dearly, my tired eyes

peering through the wriggling heat steaming up from the fire. This time the shadow was plainly not that of the Monster, not that of anything even remotely shaped like a human being. Rather, the shadow had a kind of large, lizard-like configuration, bearing a high fin – suggesting the sail of an old-fashioned ship – on its back.

The cave resounded with a loud reptilian hiss.

This time I was certain that I was awake and not the victim of an overactive imagination. Backing against the wall, my heart beating fast and my spear ready to fly, I waited and watched as the thing made its appearance. It was a *Dimetrodon*, at least seven feet in length, crawling into view from deeper within the cave. Superficially resembling a gigantic lizard, it sported a dorsal fin comprising a series of elongated spines joined together by a membrane of scaly reptilian skin. Its teeth, especially the larger upper teeth, and the eyes, shown brightly in the firelight. This pelycosaur, survivor of the Permian period, a time predating even the earliest dinosaurs, ambulated in a fashion suggesting some monstrous crocodile. And in my mind, there was no mistaking toward what – or rather whom – the animal was headed.

Believing the reptile would attack me at any moment, I raised my spear to about ear level and focused my vision onto the sail-back's throat, speculating that area to be the best target to bring this creature down. Oddly, however, the *Dimetrodon* did not attack me, but instead passed me by, sniffing at what remained of the cooked *Smilodon* meat, the aroma of which still permeated the cave. My eyes never blinked, my spear arm never lowered, as I watched the pelycosaur devour the first cooked food it had ever consumed. I was finally beginning to relax when, its hunger apparently still not satisfied, the giant reptile finally turned its attention toward me.

The time to strike was now, I told myself, before the *Dimetrodon* had a chance to attack me. The animal roared, the sound echoing again the barren walls of the cave.

Then the cave resounded by another roar – one that I had heard many times before.

"No...But Winslow!" the voice finally spoke, tinged with hate.

I knew that voice, but hearing it actually articulate words brought to me a new sense of horror.

"You will not...fight that animal," the voice roared again. "It might...slay you...and then my own miserable existence...would

be...without meaning."

The *Dimetrodon* no longer instilled in me any feelings of fear or horror. It was as if, upon hearing those words, the prehistoric reptile now inching its way toward me did not even exist. Slowly, I looked toward the cave entrance, knowing in advance what I would see there—the skyscraping form of Frankenstein's creation. It stood there against the light of the moon like some vengeful Spirit of Death, its shoulder-length black hair rustling in the evening breeze.

"You!" I exclaimed, the tone of my voice betraying the animosity I bore for this monstrosity that I had revived so many months ago. "You demon! You are alive!"

"Yes, alive...you would-be...Frankenstein!" snarled the Monster.

"I think I like you even less now that you've regained your ability to speak."

The creature spawned from morgues and cemeteries stomped into the cave, the light of its raised black boots echoing, as did a low growl escaping from behind its pearly clenched teeth. Avoiding the fire, the Monster moved quickly through the rocky chamber in my direction, its heavily lidded eyes trained on the fin-backed reptile inching its way toward me. Stepping up to me, the brute grabbed away my spear with a strength I could not oppose and I wondered what would happen next.

By then the *Dimetrodon* was but inches away from me. In another moment it would spring forward on those lizard-like legs. Again the reptile hissed, its toothy jaws opening and ready to clamp down on its meal of man flesh.

Armed now with my spear, the Frankenstein Monster stood waiting. Then, deliberating no longer, it lunged forward and, grabbing the neck of the *Dimetrodon* with its free hand and clutching it with superhuman strength, stabbed repeatedly at the reptile's throat with the spear. Blood gushed from the dying pelycosaur and onto the Monster's black turtle-neck sweater and jacket. A second later, the Monster's yellow flesh was washed in saurian blood.

Still alive, even under the Monster's

onslaught, the *Dimetrodon* locked its jaws onto the free arm of its towering adversary. The Monster snarled from the pain of those teeth, then stormed away from the fire and toward the cave mouth, dragging the reptile—its mouth still clamped to its arm—along with it. I watched, through the rippling heat rising from the fire, as the Frankenstein creature rushed outside, where it continued stabbing its scaly foe with my spear.

I saw the *Dimetrodon* finally release its bite and plop down to the ground, inadvertently pulling itself away from the bloody spear. I watched as the lizard-like thing sprang off the ground and onto its manlike enemy, the two horrors then rolling along the ground. I heard the inhuman cries of both combatants reverberating through the cave as each creature so desperately sought the other's destruction.





But the Monster's strength and speed, as well as its cunning, were superior to those of the sail-backed saurian, the spear more formidable than its foe's claws and fangs. For every single slash and bite inflicted by the pelycosaur, the Monster doled out triple the number of spear jabs into the scaly stomach and throat.

At last, its hide showing more red than any other color, the *Dimetrodon* relaxed from exhaustion and lack of blood. No longer did it hiss or move.

The Frankenstein Monster took a deep breath of night air, then stepped away from its kill, the spear still in its hand.

Once more the Monster entered the cave, again avoiding the fire. It looked at the crimson-stained spear, and then dropped it with contempt at my feet. From the expression on the Monster's face I knew that it was reacting to the look of horror on my own countenance.

"Yes, Winslow..." the Monster stated, coldly, "again I have survived. You thought... I would die in the water...but not even the water could not kill me."

"The tranquilizer drug I gave you..." I began, slowly picking up the spear as I talked.

"The drug..." the Monster interrupted, "wore off...while you argued with...the wounded man. I...broke my chains...before we completely sank...into the lake. I found another exit...broke my way free...and swam away. Swam very fast. The flying ship hid...my body from your sight."

"But the water reptiles..."

Again the Monster cut me off. "I saw you row away...as I swam toward the shore. I was on shore...already...when the first great beast arose from the water."

I could feel warmth rush to my face. "You devil!" I snarled. "I thought I was rid of you forever."

"You will never be...rid of me, Winslow. Not while you...live."

"No!" I shouted at the creature. "With Lynn a captive of those savages, now I have you to deal with again, too--?"

Acting without really thinking of what I was doing, knowing full well that the Monster could not be killed by my primitive weapon, I nevertheless aimed my spear toward the fire. Perhaps if I could set it ablaze, make an ersatz torch that, in turn, would set fire to the Monster's clothing...

But all such notions were dashed as the Monster's left hand shot forward, snatching my arm before I could bring the spear to the



flames, squeezing just tightly enough for me to experience pain and the threat of the beast's superhuman strength. Wincing from the pressure of those yellow fingers, I relaxed my grip on the Stone Age weapon and let the spear plop against the cave floor. Once more, as so many times before, I was helpless in the presence of Frankenstein's Monster.

The ghastly visage of the Monster stared down at me, its cold gaze burning into my eyes and brain. The tiny metal clamps and crude stitches fastening shut the gash across its high forehead shone in the firelight. And a new look of hate and anger swept over the

beast's face.

The Monster growled as I heard it do so many times before regaining its power to speak.

I felt myself lifted several feet off the ground, then slammed hard against the rock wall by a simple thrust of the Monster's mighty arm.

"No, Winslow..." the Monster stated emphatically. "You will not...harm me with...fire. And I shall not...kill you. Again you must live...as long as I live. You must feel the pain...the guilt...of every evil deed

that I commit...even in this...mad world. Every human life that I take...will be in your name...and further stain your human soul."

The Monster's face, ugly to begin with, twisted into an even more hideous mask. The black nostrils flared and the yellow eyes rolled in their dark sockets.

"What did you say...about her?" the Monster inquired, with a strange emotion sound to its voice.

"Her?" I responded. "You mean Lynn?"

The Monster nodded, its long hair flopping about. "Lynn. You said...she was a captive. Of whom?"

At first I was reluctant to answer the brute, for Lynn was the one thing I loved most in this world, while the Monster was the one I most hated. But then I remembered how Lynn and the Monster shared some kind of bond; in their own ways, they actually seemed to like one another. Perhaps, in this savage world of dinosaurs, sea reptiles and primitive people, the Monster might prove, for once, to be an asset to me. Possibly I could make use of its great strength and bizarre appearance in saving Lynn from those Neanderthals. I could always, I reasoned, destroy the Monster after Lynn had been saved.

And so, I related to the Monster the events that had happened since I abandoned him inside that sinking airplane.

"So my suggestion is," I told the Monster, "that at least for the present, the two of us forget our differences and act as friends."

The giant scowled. "No!" it roared, the deep voice resounding through the cave. "We can never be...friends. We shall always...be enemies. You must suffer. You must stay behind...and wait. I will find...her."

"But..." I began to squirm, started to get up off the floor, when again that long arm was thrust forward, the enormous hand clamping down upon my throat.

"Stay here...and wait!" the Monster snarled and grunted, lifting me up by the throat and, without missing a beat, hurling me across the cave to collide against some upstanding rocks. Feeling the back of my head strike something hard, I groaned.

Then blackness overcame me.

When I regained consciousness, my eyes darted about the dark chamber. The fire was almost extinguished and I had no way of knowing how long I had remained out cold. This I knew, however – the cave, except for me, was quite empty.

And another horror had been added to the list of monstrous beings inhabiting this lost

world.

## CHAPTER TEN

I remained unconscious for the duration of the night. My eventual awakening was in part due to the rays of morning sunshine streaking into the cave. Almost immediately my mind focused upon Lynn and my need to rescue her. Now, however, she was not only in danger of her Neanderthal captors, but also the Monster of Frankenstein.

As I strode out into that prehistoric world, I thought about how I was reverting to the state of a primitive man, experiencing a kind of "reverse evolution," if not physically, at least in mind and spirit. For once I was not calculating my actions as I strode across the rough terrain of my new world, for once, there was no plan of action, no carefully pre-planned scenario to guide my actions. I only trekked onward, spear in hand and knife sheathed, ready to wield them against any foe, whether human, animal or human-created. If I retained any truly rational thoughts in my once analytical mind, they were destroyed the night before by the reappearance of the Frankenstein Monster.

When I was hungry, I killed game or ate what edible plant life was available to me. As I grew weary, I rested. The passage of time – marked only by the movement of the sun across the heavens – was gradually becoming an abstract and even alien concept to me.

Most of my thoughts, of course, were on Lynn. Indeed, some of those thoughts were quite morbid, as I imagined any number of torments and degradations she might have already suffered at the brutish hands of those Neanderthals. Although I hated myself for it, I began to think that it might be best if, upon eventually finding Lynn, she might already be dead. At least in that final sleep she would be free of those savages and any horrors they might inflict upon her.

The sun fell and rose a couple times during my journey. By then time no longer mattered to me. I had given up trying to keep track of the number of sunsets and sunrises. They only taunted me, anyway, reminding me of my slowness and ineffectualness in trying to locate the woman I loved. My only concern now was pressing ahead in my quest, not slowing down, never wasting as much as a moment, stopping only when necessary to eat or rest.

For several days I did not speak, my only vocal sounds being shouts or grunts as I brought down prey. As I forged onward, I noticed that my body was quickly becoming

more accustomed to the rugged conditions of the lost world. I could feel my strength increasing, as my muscles became more toned due to so much physical activity, and could see that my skin was becoming even more darkly toned under such constant exposure to the rays of the sun. My hair was now a brown mass that hung about my head and my facial features were already disguised by an increasing growth of beard.

I had, in effect, become a "caveman."

It might have been the third, possibly the fourth, day since my reunion with the Frankenstein Monster that I heard the scream. Definitely it was a human scream. And female.

"Lynn!" I exclaimed, speaking my first word in days. "Lynn...is that you?"

I did not receive an answer, nor did I await one. Instantly, upon hearing that human cry, I was bounding off in the direction from which I believed it had come, hoping against all improbable odds that the voice was that of my mate-to-be. My hearing seemed to be getting more acute, as I relied more upon my senses for survival in this hostile world, and was fairly confident I was headed in the correct direction.

Again, the scream.

I stopped running when I could run no farther, standing precariously at the side of a cliff. The screams seem to have come from somewhere below. My eyes focused upon a moving image clinging to a cliffside about fifty feet away, apparently unable to move up, down or sideways along the rock. She was positioned approximately sixty feet above the canyon's basin. Although the figure was unquestionably female, it was certainly not my beloved Lynn.

Dejectedly I sighed.

The woman was Neanderthal, as savage in appearance as any of the males I had encountered. She was naked, save for a breechcloth made from some kind of animal fur, possibly bear. Her large sagging breasts may have fed numerous children over the years and her matted hair hung down almost to her waist. Her face had the same rather sloping brow and large nose, as did her male counterparts. There was no way to guess at the woman's age.

One thing was certain, however; the woman was terrified, her eyes bulging wide, her forward-jutting jaws open in an expression of fear.

The cause of her fear manifested itself within seconds, heralded by the sound of flapping wings and a heart-rending shriek.

Soaring down toward her was a flying reptile about the size of a large vulture, a large-headed, long-tailed monster with a mouth adorned with sharp teeth. Nowhere near the size of the toothless and tailless pterosaur that had buzzed over plane, this seemed to be a more primitive form, a *Dimorphodon* if I recalled my paleontology, yet a dangerous member of that ancient group nonetheless.

The creature was flapping about the woman, trying to peck at her quivering form with its teeth, or lash her with the one free flinger of each leathery wing. I knew that the death the Neandertal would suffer at the teeth and nails of this demon-like animal would be slow and with considerable pain. I also knew that she was, although of a primitive species, basically human, and for that reason shared some commonality with me.

I had not reverted to such a primitive state myself that I could allow this woman to suffer such a fate. Raising my spear, I let it fly through the air. The stone head of the spear found its target, burying itself in the pterosaur's back and continuing out through the fragilely constructed chest. The *Dimorphodon* squawked loudly as its blood began to spill out of its back and front. The animal made a short and feeble attempt to flap its wings, then plummeted down into the canyon below.

Leaning forward that other cliff, I saw what I interpreted to be a look of gratitude on that homely female face. The look in her eyes sent a shudder along my spine. Was she gazing at me with more than thankfulness in her simple mind?

How the Neandertal woman ever managed to get into such a precarious position, I could not even imagine. Had she been climbing up or down? I wondered. Was she on some mission, perhaps to find food, or was she simply exploring this desolate area? Whatever her reasons for being here, she was stuck there, her sizable muscles bulging as she continued to maintain her hold on the steep surface of the cliffside.

The wall of rock was almost perpendicular to the ground below. There seemed to be no way that she could climb to any safe position. How did she even arrive in that position? There were hardly any depressions or protuberances that could have served as handholds or footholds. My first impression was that she had been placed on the cliffside where I had found her – but by whom...or what?

Knowing that she could not understand my words, I spoke to her anyway.

"Try not to move!" I yelled to her. "I'm

coming to get you!"

The Neandertal woman replied with just a few grunts, although they might have been words in her own language. I knew from their tone that she was trying to tell me that she could not maintain her grip on the rock much longer. Indeed, I could see that she was already beginning to slip down along the cliff's almost smooth surface.

I still had some of my rope; not much, but enough of sufficient length to attempt a rescue of the woman. Making my way along the upper rocks, I quickly reached the section of cliff where the woman was trapped. Tying one end of my rope to a jagged and protruding rock, I grabbed the rope, letting it go taut, then climbed down the cliffside, the soles of my shoes pressing against the smooth stone.

The woman jabbered in her own tongue as I lowered myself to her level and, with a turn of my head, motioned for her to put her arms around me. I felt a chill as she embraced me with those hairy arms, squeezing me tighter than I had anticipated, and seemingly with some other agenda than simply being rescued.

Together, our feet working against the side of the cliff and with my muscles straining under her weight, we managed to make our way upwards along the stone wall. My hands, already toughened by calluses, burned as I maintained my grasp of the rope. My muscles strained. But eventually, both of us panting and grunting, I reached the top and then helped pull the woman to a place of safety.

She stood on the summit of the cliff staring at me. It was not until that moment, seeing her up close, that I realized how "unattractive" she really was. Her face, although clearly human, had very heavy features and when she smiled at me, parting those thick lips, all I could see were her large and uneven teeth.

Finally, the Neandertal woman pointed to herself. "Morg," she said, grinning.

"Morg?" I responded, knowing that she had just introduced herself to her savior.

Then she pointed at me. I tried stepping back but her finger caught my chest anyway, poking me with the strength of a strongman.

All right, she wanted to know the name of the man who had rescued her. "Burt," I said my name slowly, but did not smile back at her. "My name is...Burt."

Her lips twitched and a curious expression showed in her eyes. Her head cocked from side to side and then that same, by now almost ubiquitous smile returned to her face. At last, after producing several unintelligible

vocal sounds, she said, "B-u-r-t-r?"

"Burt," I repeated, pointing at myself. "Morg...and Burt. How do you do?"

We knew each other's names now and I was amazed at how quickly she understood what I had tried communicating to her. Obviously these Neandertals had much keener minds than I had ever suspected. What still confused me, however, was how this woman...this Morg...had got herself into such a weird predicament. Surely that *Dimorphodon* did not have the strength to carry her to that position; nor, most likely, did even the largest of the flying reptiles of this lost world. The problem was beginning to fester in what remained of my scientist's mind. Pointing to the cliff where I had found her, and then to herself, I gave her a curious look and then waited.

Finally Morg moved closer to me and looked down into the canyon. A look of realization appeared on her suntanned face, then one of fear, even horror. Turning back toward me, the woman raised her arms high, her fingers bending to simulate claws. An almost animalistic expression distorted her already unsightly features. She snarled, growled, sounding like some kind of unknown beast. Then she said but one word, "Tor!"

"Tor?" I inquired. The word had no meaning for me. Thus far the only things spoken by the woman that I could understand were our respective names.

Morg walked closer to the edge of the cliff, then motioned for me to follow. She led me past the part of the cliff from which I had rescued her and pointed down to a muddy area down below. Mists had settled over the ground but, occasionally parting, afforded me with a look of what lay below.

What I saw down there only deepened the mystery.

At the base of the cliff, partially concealed by the mists, was the carcass of a large carnivorous dinosaur, apparently an *Allosaurus*. Its body not yet found by the scavengers, the animal was undoubtedly dead. Even from this distance I could see that its jaws were broken, as if literally pulled apart by some powerful force, the lower jaw hanging at an impossible angle. The blood was only beginning to clot and I guessed that the dinosaur had only been recently slain.

"Tor?" I asked, pointing down at the dead *Allosaurus*. "Is that your Tor?"

Morg began to jabber again, shaking her head in every possible direction. I was quickly coming to realize that the dinosaur

lying dead in the canyon was not this mysterious "Tor," but rather its victim, a creature so terrible that its very presence may have, at least for a while, scared off any scavengers that might enjoy a meal of alligator meat. No, that was not Tor down there, and a dinosaur could never have set the woman where I had found her.

The woman pointed down in the direction of the *Alligator*, but off to the side of its scaly body. "Tor," she said the word again.

I strained my eyes for a better look, finally spotting the trail of footprints leading away from the carcass in the mud. The tracks were huge and oddly had an almost human quality about them. Again the scientist's mind raced inside this "prehistoric man's" body: I knew of no such huge manlike creature in the fossil record, and not even the celebrated *Gigantopithecus* of Southeast Asia attained such proportions to match those tracks.

"Tor?" I asked, pointing toward the tracks.

Grinning hideously, Morg nodded, her head bobbing up and down frantically. "Tor!"

A feeling of uneasiness swept over me. Whatever this "Tor" was had apparently placed Morg along the side of this cliff in order to battle the *Alligator*. Possibly this "Tor" sustained wounds during its fight with so vicious a dinosaur. In my imagination I could envision the unfocused images of a somewhat manlike creature, whatever it was, staggering away to nurse its wounds, its dull brain having forgotten that the Neandertal was still clinging to the rock.

Now the enigmatic "Tor" was another very real danger to consider in my lost world.

Yet there was an even more immediate threat than the author of those giant footprints. Morg had taken an instant liking to me, an attachment that I certainly did not relish. The more her attachment became obvious, the more uncomfortable I became and the woman's homeliness seemed to increase. My main criterion for sticking with her was the thought that Morg might be a member of the same tribe that had kidnapped Lynn. If that were the case, perhaps Morg could lead me to the woman I loved.

My shoes by now worn and damaged, I removed them and decided to go, from now on, barefoot.

Rather than climb down into the canyon to retrieve my spear, I made a new one. As I sat on a boulder and used some of my rope to fasten the spearhead to the shaft, Morg approached me gingerly. She had not actually touched me since we climbed together up that cliffside, but as I finished working on my

spear I felt her coarse hand rub against my back.

Reacting instantly, I got up from the boulder and, with a forceful swing of the shaft, I pressed my spearhead against her chest. The look of rejection that turned her features told me that she understood my meaning. Her eyes, staring widely at me, began to well up with moisture. I felt bad for hurting the woman's feelings, but knew that our "relationship" had to be defined from the start if we were to spend any time together.

Pressing the tip of the spearhead against her throat, I spoke in words, the tone of which I hoped she could interpret. "Look," I said, "I saved your life and we're going to make this journey together. But that's as far as our 'relationship' goes, do you understand? Touch me again and I might be forced to use this." I took away the spear and, for emphasis, slapped the point with my other hand.

Although Morg could not understand my words, she stepped away from me, and then looked toward the distant hills.

I knew that she understood.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

Although Morg continued to ogle me, as we continued our long trek, she made no more anomalous advances. Of course, taking no chances that she would, I always made sure that my spear was within her range of vision. I could imagine what those powerful arms of hers might do to me, if she chose to ignore the spear and—if Neandertals knew such signs of human affection—give me a mighty hug.

By now I was convinced that the woman's tribe was the same to which the hunters who kidnapped Lynn belonged. She was leading me in the same general direction that I deduced Lynn had been taken. Soon those dark areas that I had detected earlier were close enough for positive identification. As I had suspected, they indicated caves.

We reached our destination after nightfall.

I let Morg lead the way up a rocky slope toward the great cave that was home to her people. Its vast entrance glowed with the light of several fires. Until that moment I had not even suspected that Neandertal man sophisticated enough to number fire among his inventions. As we approached the cave mouth I immediately began to look around, trying to detect some evidence of Lynn's presence. As of yet, I saw no sign of the woman I loved. A terrible sensation overcame

me, as, in my heart I knew that she could not have survived for this many days and nights, among the denizens of this cave, alive and unmolested. Nevertheless, I refused to give up hope that Lynn had somehow survived unscathed. Perhaps, I told myself, this was not even the right cave or the correct tribe, and Lynn was, in fact, somewhere else.

From the overall attitude I perceived of the people of this tribe, whose normal lifestyle did not seem in any way disrupted, I also deduced that the Frankenstein Monster had not yet made its appearance on these premises.

Naturally, as Morg led me nearer to the cave, my presence stirred the interest and curiosity of everyone.

"I suppose this is your home," I said words to Morg that she could not possibly understand. "You've been on fairly good behavior since we started out on this trip, which is why you're still alive. I just hope your people share your good judgment."

By the time we actually stepped into the mouth of the cave, the area was filling with Neandertals of both sexes and all ages. All the males of hunting age bore weapons, which were promptly held out threateningly at me, ready to strike. Thus far I did not recognize any of the males that I had encountered earlier; but then, most of these brutes looked the same to me anyway. I wondered if, in fact, anyone recognized me, with my thicker growth of beard, unkempt hair and darker skin, not to mention my new attire which was now more in keeping with their own primitive sense of "style." I smiled slightly, knowing that to them I must appear to be some kind of alien being, at least a foreigner.

No one had yet made a really aggressive move toward me, let alone an outright attack. They were examining me with their eyes, touching me, gently poking me with their spears and axes, basically "checking me out." All the while they kept murmuring and jabbering, probably discussing what to do with this strange visitor to their domain.

Was I a friend or enemy? A threat that must be eliminated?

Firmly I clutched my spear, my left hand flying to the handle of my sheathed Bowie knife. There was no doubt in my mind that the Neandertals had collectively decided to dispose of me before evaluating me and my motives for being here.

That was when Morg rushed into the firelight, pushing her way through the crowd. She was saying something in a tone that suggested that she was pleading for my life.

During her "speech" I heard the word "Tor" mentioned several times, each instance getting a reaction from her audience.

At the appearance of Morg and hearing her words, the other Neanderthals smiled in their strange and unsightly way, and then lowered their weapons.

"Burt," she finally said, pointing at me, taking my hand, her strong fingers clasp my wrist as I did hers in some kind of primitive "warrior's handshake."

Releasing me from her grip, Morg stepped aside, as other Neanderthals approached me and eagerly took my hand in the same symbolic way. The feeling was unbelievable! From the looks on the faces of these primitive people, and by the way they were now greeting me, I knew that they were regarding me as some kind of hero - someone who had saved one of their own from the great and mysterious Tor. No longer was I a potential enemy to be feared but instead a friend to be respected. Lowering my weapon as a visual signal, I allowed myself to be ushered by the Neanderthals deeper into their cave.

I could see then that the main chamber of this cave was vast, large enough to accommodate many families. The ceiling was so high that, in the twilight, I was barely able to see it. To one side of this chamber, placed in a grotto that suggested to me a shrine, was the mummified head of what appeared to be a giant cave bear, mounted atop a wooden shaft. As I continued to look around I noticed that all of the Neanderthals wore skimpy attire all of which seemed to be made from that same Stone Age animal. Several Neanderthal women were bowing in front of the head, whispering it.

I had read in an old anthropology book about a so-called "Cult of the Cave Bear," whereby Neanderthal people worshipped such animals as gods. In my mind flashed a possible scenario in which the bear once occupied this very cave. After tribal hunters slew the beast and took over its former domain, they retained its head, preserved via natural mummification, as a totem.

Religion and fire! For savages, these people were proving to be oddly sophisticated.

By now, the Neanderthals were not just crowding around me and talking about me, they were also offering me "gifts" of appreciation - necklaces of shells and animal teeth and the cooked flesh of unidentified animals. I was hungry again and ate whatever they gave me, wondering what kind of prehistoric beast was serving as my dinner.

As my sense of taste was already beginning to differentiate mammal from reptile, I knew that my current meal consisted of some kind of saurian meat, probably that of a dinosaur. As the meat was not the freshest I had ever consumed, I wondered if this might be some leftover from the *Triceratops* I had seen killed some days ago.

Indeed, looking around the cave as I started to eat the meat, I saw the head of a horned dinosaur of that genus, the skin already beginning to dry about its elongated face and frill.

As I ate, various children of the tribe approached me with some fear, careful not to get too close. Smaller versions of the adults, the youngsters finally worked up the courage to finger me, touch the handle of my Bowie knife - which must to them have seemed like state of the art technology - and grasp my spear.

While the children made their own evaluation of Burt Winslow, I turned my attention to Morg, watching as she lumbered across the great chamber. She stopped before a particularly burly and hairy Neanderthal male, who was just sitting down atop the dinosaur head. It was then that the realization struck me. If that were indeed the same *Triceratops* whose demise I had witnessed, then the hunters of this tribe killed the animal and I was in the correct cave. Now there could be no doubt that it was members of this very tribe that had abducted Lynn. That raised the odds that, alive or dead, Lynn could very well be somewhere within the labyrinths of this cave!

I noted now that the *Triceratops* skull seemed to serve as some kind of royal throne. The shaggy Neanderthal sat atop the cranium, leaning his bulk back against the great bony frill. His hands gripped the sides of the frill and his feet rested against the two brow horns. Several necklaces of teeth, all of them long and pointed, adorned his rather short neck.

The man's eyes opened wider as Morg conversed with him. She seemed to be somewhat disappointed in his cold reception toward her, the man apparently tolerating her presence, even as she began to stroke his hair and powerfully

constructed physique. She whispered things in his ears and pointed back toward me, at which time he looked in my direction, his eyes narrowing to slits.

This man had to be the tribe's chief and Morg seemed to be his mate. I felt somewhat relieved, presuming that Morg had already spoken for me. Still, no matter what she was telling him, the chief did not seem much concerned about his bride or the terrible fate from which I had rescued her.

Finally, after suspenseful minutes of silence, the chief scowled directly at me. Then, without budging from his *Triceratops*-skull throne, his face widened in a forced smile and, with a gesture of a hairy hand, he bade me to approach him.

I stepped up to him slowly but determinedly, not wanting to show even the slightest fear. Leaning forward on the skull, the chief placed his big hand on my shoulder and, pressing his fingers against my flesh, let me feel its strength. Then he extended his hand to me. Remembering the "warrior's grip" I had witnessed days ago, I clasped his wrist as he did mine, at the same time squeezing to let him experience my own strength.

"Kaz," said the chief, letting go of my wrist and thumping his chest.

Not knowing if Chief Kaz was capable of understanding a word of more than two syllables, I slapped my own chest and stated



emphatically, "Burt."

"Kaz," the chief said, then "Burt." The man spoke those names several times, then looked toward Morg and smiled at her. For now, at least, I had friends in high places in this prehistoric community.

As most of the Neandertals gathered around the mounted cave bear skull and started chanting to it, I took the opportunity to slip away to investigate my surroundings. As I left the gathering, I could not help but notice a strange sappy odor that now permeated the air. Looking back, I could see several of the women burning some unidentifiable species of leaves that released smoke in front of the bear head and produced that smell.

Exploring the cave that was now my new home, I was still under the watch of the Neandertals. Even though I had become a "friend" of the chief, I was still a stranger, one who looked different from every other member of the tribe, and therefore not to be fully trusted. The true intent of my exploration, naturally, was not to tour the cave — most of it looked virtually the same, anyway — but to find some sign that Lynn was or had been here. My eyes scrutinized every nook, every stone, every shadow as I prowled slowly through the dank chambers.

After what must have been at least a couple hours of searching the cave, I stopped in astonishment. And my heart started pounding at an almost impossible rate of speed. I focused my vision again to affirm my impression.

Seated in one of the dark crannies of the cave, naked except for a skimpy loincloth attached to a thong around her shapely hips, was Lynn! Here and alive! She was seated on a rock, alone in the shadows, barely moving, her eyes staring off into space, her long hair hanging down over her full breasts. My heart nearly exploded as I looked at her.

"Lynn!" I exclaimed, trying not to arouse the attention of any of the Neandertals.

Slowly, her face turned, then looked up at me but only with partial recognition. Her large eyes were glazed, their pupils, even in this dim light, obviously dilated. I knew that she must have been under the influence of some drug, possibly some local natural herb that had the power to dull the mind and will.

"Don't you know me?" I said, crouching down so that my eyes could look directly into hers. "It's Burt."

The hint of a smile turned her beautiful lips. She appeared to know me, but not to the extent that she seemed overly happy that I had

found her.

Quickly I returned her smile, but was careful not to show too much enthusiasm. I had no idea what the Neandertals had done to Lynn since I had last seen her on that ridge; nor did I know her position in this tribe. Better, I surmised, that we pretend, at least for the present, that we did not know each other. I binked on the fact that the warriors who had fought me on that ridge did not recognize me as the same person. My beard had grown substantially and, due to all my recent strenuous activity, most of it under the sun, I had added considerable tan and bulk to my physique. Furthermore, the clothing those Neandertal hunters had last seen me wearing

had been entirely replaced by an outfit that the "best dressed caveman" would have been proud to wear, and my modern rifle had been replaced by a primitive spear.

Finally, after what seemed like an eternity of waiting, Lynn's lips quivered and she said loudly, "Burt?"

I shook my head and pressed a finger to her lips. The cave was still vibrant with the sounds of chanting, as most of its occupants continued to worship their hideous trophy. Still, I did not want to attract undue attention to us. Looking over my shoulder and seeing that, at least for now, no primitive eyes were focused upon us, I put my hands on Lynn's



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bare shoulders and pressed her against me. She placed her hands around me in response, but only half-heartedly.

"Lynn, darling," I said, keeping my voice only loud enough to be heard over the voices of the chanters, thank God you know me. I don't know what they did to you, what they made you eat or drink to put you in this state, but believe me. I'm going to get us both out of this fix - somehow."

"I...know, Burt," she responded as if speaking from a dream.

"We'll have to be careful," I told her, "pretend to be strangers as best we can, just for a while. But when the first opportunity arises, I promise I'll get us out of here. Do you understand?"

Lynn nodded, the little smile still on her face, although a single tear was now running down one cheek. In that moment how I hated the men who had taken Lynn away. What they might have done to her since that day I did not even want to imagine. At least I could detect no physical damage to her body, no bruises or cuts. Perhaps, I hoped, the only thing that these primitives had done to her was subject her to whatever it was that was dulling her mind.

"Stay here," I instructed her, standing and squeezing the woman's shoulders for assurance. "I just want to check on the status of our hosts. Okay?"

Again she nodded.

Walking up close to the scene of worship, I could see, beyond the heads of the chanters, that the head of the cave bear was hardly more than a skull, with dried bits of skin and hair still sticking to it in various places.

"Pretty soon they'll be needing a new god," a voice said from behind me. It was not Lynn's voice, but a deep masculine voice speaking to me in perfect English. "That one's getting a bit worn, I'd say."

My mind whirled! What I had heard was impossible. Turning quickly, I beheld a man - plainly a modern man and not a Neandertal - with a long gray beard and shaggy hair of the same color. He appeared to be at least in his middle sixties. His clothing consisted of a crudely fashioned tunic apparently made of bisonkin that covered his flat chest and hung down almost to his bony knees. The man's presence here, I thought, could well explain the Neandertal hunters' rather blasé reaction to my M-16 rifle.

I could feel my face widen into an enormous grin that conveyed my surprise.

"Good God, man?" I exclaimed, my voice sounding above the chanting. "Who are you

and how the hell did you ever get into this crazy situation?"

The gray beard moved as the old man smiled back at me. "First things first, young fellow," he said. "And it looks as if you've got a story to swap with me, too. The name is Marvin. Professor Marvin Sara, they used to call me long ago. You can call me Marvin."

"Burt," I said anxiously shaking his hand and smiling. "Dr. Burt Winslow." Then I motioned for him to follow me to a spot not far from where Lynn was sitting so that we could talk in privacy.

"And I must say," Marvin continued, "it's mighty refreshing seeing someone around here without a sloping brow - not including that pretty blonde, of course, who came in just a few days ago."

"Lynn," I informed him. "Lynn Powell. She was...is my fiancée."

"Until they brought her here," he went on, "I thought for sure I was doomed to spend the rest of my days here. But so far she's never said anything to me. They've kept her too doped up to be much of a conversationalist."

"The leaves they keep burning for their little religious ceremony?" I asked, briefly gazing at the smoke drifting before the sightless eyes of the cave bear head.

Marvin nodded. "But in much stronger dosages. Don't worry, she'll be all right again once that stuff wears off."

I had to know, "What have they done to her? If they've touched her in any way, I'll drive my spear through every Neandertal heart in this place. I'll -" My hand tightened on the shaft of my weapon.

The Professor grasped my arms to calm me down. "Don't worry, my lad," he said. "Nothing's happened to the girl yet, and I've been watching her just to make sure."

"I appreciate that."

"Kaz, the chief of these savages, wants her for himself," Marvin said. "Good thing I learned their language long ago and that the chief has come to confide in me. He thinks of me as some kind of wise man or sage, maybe because I taught him so many things."

"Like making fire?" I volunteered.

"Nope," he said, "that was one

invention they figured out on their own. But getting back to your fiancée, so far Kaz - at least to my knowledge - had not yet touched the girl, if you know what I mean. Maybe it's because he's afraid of what his mate might do. But more likely, it's because of his warriors."

"His warriors? The ones who captured Lynn?"

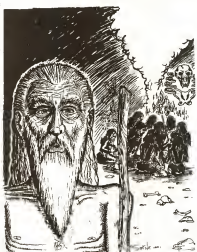
"They regard her as some kind of blonde goddess, too good...too special...for any one man, the chief included. And they seem to be saving her for something."

I hated the sound of that. "Saving her?" I asked. "For what?"

"Damned if I know," he said, "but something special, that's for certain. I only hope that sooner or later of Kaz doesn't get tired of waiting and realize he's more a man with the usual male engravings than a believer in this cave bear religion." Looking me up and down, Marvin said, "I can see that you're already adopting the ways of this prehistoric planet."

"Yes," I answered, "looking at me you'd never suspect that I'm really a scientist. But you started to tell me about yourself. Where are you from and how did you ever wind up in this God-forsaken place?"

"Years ago, can't tell you how many because I'd lost track of time," but sometime during the World War, when I first assumed



my post as Curator of Vertebrate Paleontology at the Marshall Natural History Museum in..."

"Excuse me," I interrupted. "but you mean World War Two?"

"There was a second?" he said, startled.

Good lord! I thought. The man, though of advanced age, could not still be alive if, during the first World War he had already occupied a curator's post at a museum. If what he was saying were true, he would have to be well over a hundred and twenty-five years old, even though he looked nowhere near that age. My only explanation was that the same amazing forces that preserved, in this lost world, so many life forms from different ages also retarded the paleontologist's aging.

"Never mind," I said, not wanting to confuse the man. "Please, continue."

"Anyway, I always believed that, somewhere in this vast world, many of the animals familiar to me as fossils in museum collections still thrived. Just curating such fossils had become rather dull to me and I was tired of just digging for bones in the field. Finding live dinosaurs and other prehistoric creatures became an obsession for me."

I had to smile, for his obsession virtually paralleled my original one in tracking down and then reviving Frankenstein's Monster.

"I heard legends...folk tales...stories about a vast plateau somewhere in the middle of Africa, a plateau mostly hidden in the clouds, where weird animals of incredible size and appearance roamed. Some of the natives' descriptions that reached me through a network of sources sounded suspiciously like descriptions of animals from past ages. On a whim, I gathered together what money I had saved up, purchased an airplane, learned to fly it, and headed out this way. Needless to add, I was a better paleontologist than a pilot. Nor did I pay much attention to how much fuel the plane contained. So, when I hit that strange force blanket or whatever it was, and almost out of gas, well...let's just say I'm fortunate that I was able to walk away from that landing."

"Your plane...?" I asked. "Was it destroyed?"

"No," Marvin said, "I banged against some peaks on the way down, but the ship's mostly intact. Apparently the cave people watched my descent and, thinking me some kind of oracle from the sky, they took me in. My plane they mistook for some kind of strange flying reptile. Anyway, I've been living here ever since, helping them out here and there,

while at the same time observing them and the way they live."

"Don't you want to leave this place and return to your own world?"

"Not really," Marvin said. "I've grown quite accustomed to this world. Besides, think of the opportunities for an obsessive paleontologist. It's like spending the rest of one's life in a living museum!"

I understood Marvin Sara's passion, but it was one that I did not share. "Well," I said, "I'm not a paleontologist, nor is my fiancée. And we'd like nothing better than to get off this plateau and back to the world of automobiles and computers."

"Computers?"

Rather than answer, I told him how Lynn and I had come to be misread in this lost world.

"I always believed the Frankenstein character to be sheer fiction," the Professor said, "a villain in Mary Shelley's novel and in that movie of Tom Edison made some years ago. But if dinosaurs can exist in this modern age of airplanes and machineguns, why not Frankenstein's Monster?"

"I fear you'll see how real the Monster is soon enough," I said, "for no doubt it will cross our paths eventually."

As I spoke, I saw Chief Kaz stomp away from the other cave bear worshippers and halt close to Lynn. His face widened into a lecherous grin as he ran his fingers through her thick hair, pulling it away from her chest. A look of fear appeared in her eyes and she looked toward me as if for help.

Without thinking, I snapped up my spear, ready to hurl it at the savage, when Marvin Sara grabbed my arm and stopped me.

"Wait," he told me, "there's no need to give yourself away yet." He nodded and I saw what he meant.

Morg was already rushing up to her mate's side, a frown on her face and a barrage of unknown words blasting from her mouth. With incredible strength, she pulled Kaz away from Lynn, making me shudder at the thought of what those muscles of hers might have previously done to me.

"She is telling...no warning Kaz that she is his mate and that he cannot have the skinny woman with hair like the sunlight," Marvin interpreted. "Ah, yes, of Morg is quite a woman and just about a match for the chief. I don't think of Kaz will try anything more 'forward' with your lady friend until his wife's body is dead and buried."

By the time Kaz and Morg returned to

join the others, the chanting had increased in fervor almost to frenzied proportions. As they all waved their hands and bowed before their grim deity, their voices seared into a single word, spoken in unison again:

"Tor! Tor! Tor!"

I leaned closer to Professor Marvin Sara.

"So, again I hear of this mysterious 'Tor.' It's surely not that ugly head they're all worshipping, but something much bigger and more dangerous. I know, because I saw its tracks."

"Yes, Tor makes them pray, all right," Marvin said, "and indeed he should. They'll pray until all the flesh rots off that skull and they have to hunt down another bear whose head will replace that one."

I inched myself back, unnoticed by the worshipping Neanderthals, stopping just inches away from the still-dragged Lynn, gently resting a hand on her shoulder. Moments later, the paleontologist was standing next to me.

"Burt, I was...afraid that..." she started, this time with more awareness, as if the effects of the herbs were wearing off.

Smiling at her, I looked back at Marvin. "But just what is this...Tor?" I asked him.

His bearded face looked grim as he answered me. "Just the most terrible creature in all creation," he said, "one that would make your Frankenstein Monster appear to be an angel from above. He is Tor - King of Beasts!"

## CHAPTER TWELVE

"Surely, you're joking!" I assure you, Dr. Winslow, I have not told a 'joke' since the shot was fired that started off the World War."

I was still laughing at Professor Marvin Sara's blunt response to my question of what this mysterious "Tor" creature was that the Neanderthals held in such reverence, and which had been the catalyst for my meeting Morg and, inevitably, finding Lynn.

Lynn, however, was not laughing. Still under the mind-numbing influence of the leaves, she tugged at my arm for assurance and I could feel her trembling.

"Then, if I didn't make myself clear the first time, Doctor, let me reiterate," Marvin said as if giving a lecture. "Tor is the most monstrous creature living on this plateau. He is an impossible animal, a creature that surpasses even your own Frankenstein Monster in defying the laws of Nature, an animal unknown in all paleontology and zoology, perhaps a mutation of some kind."



"But really, Professor," I said, chuckling, "a giant...gorilla?"

"That is what it is, nevertheless," said Marvin. "I've seen the thing myself—at a safe distance, of course. And you saw its tracks, which were certainly not those of any of the giant reptiles. Tor is a colossal ape, and a quite intelligent one, according to Kaz."

"Judging from those footprints," I said, "this Tor must be about three of four stories tall."

"What is most distressing," said Marvin, "are the beast's cunning and his fascination over human females, and the surest way to get rid of that giant pest is to offer it a woman sacrifice."

"Was Morg one of these 'sacrifices,' Marvin?" I asked.

Marvin glanced back at the Neandertals, still engaged in their ritual, then back at me. "I'm...not sure, but I have my suspicions. Everyone around here likes Morg. Even though she's not much for the eyes, she has a nice disposition, as far as cavewomen go, that is. A few days ago she just 'disappeared'... coincidentally, about the same time your Miss Powell here showed up. To be honest, I'm not so sure ol' Kaz is that happy about his mate coming back."

I looked at Lynn, the glassy look still in her eyes. "Competition?" I asked.

"Could be," said the Professor. "If not for the other cave-men, treating Miss Powell like a goddess and all, I think ol' Kaz might've made his 'move' on her already."

Slipping my arm around Lynn's bare waist, I drew her toward me, feeling her shudder.

"Don't get too close," she said, her voice soft. "If Kaz notices, he might..."

"No need to worry about Chief Kaz," I said to Lynn. "I think I can handle that out."

So far, the Neandertals seemed not to be interested in the three of us, at least for the moment, their focus being upon their rites of the cave bear; nor did our voices carry above their chanting and hooting. Now, I knew, was the best opportunity to get information from Professor Sara that might eventually lead to our escape from this lost world.

"Do you have any weapons?" I asked the old man. "Any 'modern' weapons, I mean. Any guns? Grenades?"

"Not a one," Marvin answered. "I saw the last of them—a nice rifle—maybe forty years ago. Ran out of ammunition so there was no reason to keep it. I let the cave people have it for a digging tool. All I have now is

what you see the people around here using. You know, your standard issue Stone Age knife and spear." Speaking, he indicated the animal-skin sheath worn on his hip and the crudely made knife it contained.

"And your plane?" I asked, anxious to hear some good news regarding the craft that brought him to this place.

"Only the wing was damaged," said Marvin, who then shook his head. "I suppose the wing could be repaired. But before I really had a chance to examine it, the cave people took me away. Before my attention was totally focused upon the fauna and flora of this prehistoric world and away from anything modern."

"Is this plane still where it crashed?" I asked, again hoping.

"Who knows? I haven't been to the site since the crash-up," he said. "But even if it is, what's the point? I arrived on this plateau in the early part of the last century...another millennium, for God's sake! If the plane hasn't already been torn apart by Tor or a *Stegosaurus* or some other giant beast, it must have rusted away or fallen apart long ago."

An idea was beginning to formulate in my mind, one involving the Professor's aircraft and the weird choral properties of this lost world. Whether what I was thinking had merit or not, I knew that I had to see and examine the wreckage of Marvin's plane for myself. If my suspicions were correct, perhaps we would not be stranded in this world of dinosaurs for the rest of our lives.

"Tell me, Professor," I said, "is there another way out of this cave? And if so, is it heavily guarded?"

Lynn motioned toward a dark area of the cave just behind the place where the three of us were talking.

"Yes," said Marvin, "back there is an exit, much smaller than the main entrance that you came through. As far as I know, there's just one man standing guard, at least while the bear worship is going on. He remains on guard only via a special 'dispensation' by Chief Kaz, and even then, must be silently praying to the cave bear god while on duty."

"Let me ask you one more thing, Professor," I said. "I know this plateau holds a special interest for you. As a fellow scientist, I can relate to that. But do you honestly want to spend the rest of your days in this God-forsaken place?"

"Well, I..."

"Haven't you, after all these years, amassed enough data to write that great, definitive book on Mesozoic life? And aren't

you curious to see how the 'real world' has changed in all the many decades you have been away from it? I ask you these things, Professor, because Lynn and I are going to make a break for it!"

Although still under the influence of the drug, Lynn beamed as she heard my words of optimism. "Escape!" she said, gasping, her blue eyes wide. "But how—?"

A look of deep concern, possibly hope, appeared on Marvin's hairy face. "Long ago I had given up on even the most remote possibility that I'd ever see the modern world again. Frankly, I'd grown more or less content here. But now things are different. I've seen enough living dinosaurs and prehistoric mammals to satisfy me forever. And I never dreamed that I'd ever again encounter real human beings—that speak English, no less! Yes, Burt, count me in! But how do you plan to accomplish this great escape?"

"Can you take me to your plane?" was all I said in reply.

"I think I still remember where it crashed," he said, talking fast. "But what good will that do? Even if the plane were intact, what little remained of the fuel probably leaked out long ago."

"Don't worry about that," I said. "I have a plan that just might work. But first I need to see your plane."

Turning to Lynn, I asked, "Do you still have your weapon?"

She nodded, stepping up to a dark niche in the cave wall and removing from it her sheathed Bowie knife. "I had this with me when they brought me here," she said, her voice still rather faint though stronger than it had been only minutes ago. "Before they could take it from me, I hid it."

"Then why are we standing around here gabbing?" said the old man. "Let's get the hell out of here and back to civilization!"

As Marvin spoke, I saw Lynn's body suddenly grow tense. Turning around, I saw the muscular figure of Kaz standing behind her, a terrible look twisting the features of his Neandertal face. He had slipped away from the religious ceremony while the rest of his tribe continued with their worship. The chief's attention was not on me, as though I was to him insignificant, but only on Lynn. A sweaty hand flew to Lynn's shoulder and squeezed and a wild, almost crazed expression appeared on the "caveman's" face.

My instincts—which governed so many of my actions in my recent past—clicked into top gear. The brutish Kaz had dared to touch

the woman I loved. I felt my face grow hot with rage and hatred, my eyes widen angrily. And I saw the look of horror that had suddenly twisted Lynn's beautiful features.

Thrusting forward my spear, I jabbed it against Kaz's back, just hard enough to make my intent known, then snarled at the man, "Get your filthy hands off her!"

Kaz looked at me dumbfounded, not knowing the meaning of my words but full comprehending the threat of my weapon. The look on his face told me that the chief was not accustomed to being challenged, and that probably few if any of his tribesmen had ever before raised a spear against him. Quickly raising his own spear, he blocked mine, then growled some unintelligible word at me. In his eyes was a blazing lust to kill.

"Marvin!" I exclaimed, pulling back my spear in anticipation of a thrust. "Get Lynn out of here! The back way!"

I saw, with my peripheral vision, a blur of motion as Marvin grabbed Lynn's arm, then disappeared with her into the blackness that filled the rear end of the cave. I heard her speak my name from the darkness, and then heard only the grunting and snarling of my Neanderthal opponent.

Kaz lashed at me with what must have been all of his formidable strength, a human juggernaut whose singular purpose was the destruction of this man who had dared oppose him. I knew that this battle must be finished as quickly and efficiently as possible. Lynn and Marvin Sara would need my help once they reached the rear exit and its solitary guard. And it would not be long before the other Neanderthals, even during their religious fervor, noticed the commotion and responded to their chieftain's aid.

Fortunately one of the things that the paleontologist did not teach Kaz was modern fighting technique. A forceful kick to the Neanderthal's hairy chest sent him tumbling backwards, his spear still clutched tightly.

"No offense," I said, mistaking my spear for the kill, "but you've left me no choice."

I heard a familiar chattering and, my eyes shifting quickly, I saw Morg rushing toward us, an imploring look in her eyes. Despite all his faults, which included his last for Lynn and leaving her to the giant ape, she still loved this brute. And, after all, Morg did lead me, albeit inadvertently, to where Lynn had been taken and also to Marvin Sara, who offered the possibility, slim though it was, of escape from this lost land. How could I in all conscience deprive Morg of the man she loved?

By now the other Neanderthals were breaking away from their worshipping and rushing toward me. Giving Kaz a quick spear-jab to the cranium that left him stunned, yet alive, I disappeared into the shadows of the cave in pursuit of Lynn and the Professor. As I ran through the blackness, I kept wondering if I had done the smart thing in allowing Kaz to remain alive. Eventually, with the voices of angry Neanderthals sounding behind me, I saw a circle of light come into view through the darkness, beyond which shined the stars and the moon.

Lynn and Marvin Sara were standing by the cave exit, held at spear point by that lone Neanderthal guard.

As I got up close to my friends, the tunnel was alive with a cacophony of Neanderthal voices.

"Get set to run!" I shouted to Lynn and Marvin as I rushed toward the guard.

Snapping around to face me, the guard directed his spear toward me, but found my own weapon impeding his gut before he had time to attack. He mumbled something, possibly a last prayer to his cave bear god, as he dropped to his knees, his hands making a futile attempt to pull out the spear.

Retrieving my weapon, not bothering to wipe the scarlet gore from its point, I motioned to my friends. A moment later we were rushing toward the opening that, we hoped, would lead us to freedom. Behind us charged a mob of hostile Neanderthal warriors, whooping and yelling curses and threats in their native tongue. The three of us had made it onto their list of enemies. I had angered and no doubt shamed their chief and killed one of their own guards. Furthermore, Marvin Sara, a man who had so long been the Neanderthals' friend, had sided with me and sided with the woman upon whom Kaz had had designs. If we did not escape from this cave now, there was no way these cave dwellers would let us live.

Moments later we were outside the cave and, on a path lit by the moonlight, slipping and sliding down a pebbly incline. We gained distance rapidly. Our legs relatively longer than those of our pursuers, we got a good head start. With enough distance gained



between us and "them," we had the luxury of pausing to rest, confident that a few seconds spent sitting on the rocks would not hinder our run to freedom.

The place that we rested was indeed an eerie one, a clearing some hundred yards or so away from where a thick mass of jungle growth began. From someplace not too far away came the howls and yelps of dire wolves and hyaenodons. But their baleful chorus was not the sound that was most disturbing on this eventful night. For, as we regained our breaths, we could hear the sound of something crashing through the jungle. Something enormous, big enough to knock down entire trees. From that dark vegetation came a deep-throated growl that was surely not that of one of the lost world's dinosaurian species.

In the distance Kaz and his band of Neanderthals were already visible, trudging rapidly in our direction, spears, clubs and stone-headed axes raised. We had rested long enough and, luckily, still had plenty of distance between us and our irate pursuers. Yet upon reacting to those sounds from the jungle, Kaz stopped in his tracks, waved a signal with his spear, and led his savage band back in the direction from which they had come.

Simultaneously, strangely and suddenly, the wolves and prehistoric hyaenas stopped

making noise and the entire area, except for the occasionally growl from the jungle, became silent.

Lynn grabbed my arm, a look of fear in her eyes.

"What's going on?" I said in a sotto voice to Marvin Sam, knowing that whatever was making its way through that dark foliage cast fear into man and animal alike.

"Remember that impossible creature I told you about?" replied the Professor.

With eyes wide, the three of us watched as the foliage, almost black in the darkness of night, began to part, a gigantic almost manlike form glimpsed behind the moving branches and leaves. And through that foliage, lit by the moonbeams, an impossible, terrible face grinned down at us, its teeth an array of whiteness. Its huge eyes shifted in their dark sockets and focused upon us.

Lynn, as long as I had known her, almost never screamed – but she did in that moment, as she held onto me with all her strength.

As the monster lumbered out of the jungle we could see it in all of its fantastic glory – an enormous gorilla, roaring in defiance as it tore asunder the foliage and dashed it against the ground. The creature lumbered toward us on all fours, its black knuckles scraping against the ground. The worst aspect of the creature, aside from its size, was the eyes, its gaze now locked upon the near-naked loveliness of my beloved Lynn. Observing her, the giant ape grinned wider, displaying its task-like teeth.

Professor Sara's skinny body shook and his lips twitched. "That's him, all right, Dr. Winslow," Marvin said. "Meet *Tor*! King of Beasts!"

The monster called *Tor* stomped in our direction, its eyes never off the blonde-haired beauty. The gorilla's coat appeared black in the darkness, with a bluish sheen cast by the moonbeams.

As a scientist, I could hardly believe what my own highly trained eyes were looking at – an ape more than thirty feet in height, roaring down at us like living thunder. But again I believed that nothing in this insane world of displaced time was really impossible. Perhaps, I thought, animals like *Tor* evolved in the lost world, shaped by those forces that bent the rules of nature. And I knew that, where there was one such creature, there should also be more.

"I don't know if we can outrun that monster, but I see no other options," I said.

Lynn nodded and I could see that the effects of the leaves were finally wearing off. "I've always been a fast runner," she said, a little smile on her lips.

"Well," added Marvin, "what are we waiting for?"

We ran! But even as we bolted along, *Tor* was in quick pursuit, ambling on all fours. Ahead of us, seen as the first hint of dawn's light appeared over the horizon, was a dark area that, as we approached it, proved to be an opening in the ground, a fissure perhaps created by an earthquake. There was no way to determine how deep that fissure was, but at the moment it seemed to offer us our only salvation.

"There!" I hollered, pointing ahead.

With me in the lead, we leaped into the fissure. I felt as if my insides were being rearranged as my feet finally collided with solid ground. Lynn and Marvin dropped beside me and I could only imagine how such an impact must have affected a man of the Professor's advanced age.

"Maybe he won't see us down here in the darkness," whispered Lynn.

"I hate to be the bearer of bad news," said Marvin, panting for breath, "but nothing escapes the notice of *Tor*."

The giant ape advanced rapidly, its awesome form appearing even more threatening in the early light of day. Nearing the fissure, the creature sniffed about loudly. Then, the monster's bulk blotting the sky from our view, *Tor*'s terrible face peered down through the crack in the ground, the yellowish eyes singling out Lynn.

She moved closer to me.

"He likes the ladies, that's for sure," said Professor Sara, "but he's never seen one like Miss Powell. Neither had those cavemen. That's what they were saving her up for – to sacrifice to *Tor* when the appropriate time arrived. Looks to me like now they won't have to bother."

I felt Lynn's body shudder.

"Shut up!" I said, glaring at Marvin. "Nothing is going to happen to Lynn! Not while I'm here." Those were bold words, I knew. And at that point I had no idea what a creature like *Tor* even did with its female sacrifices. I knew that gorillas were vegetarians. Did the ape's fascination with tiny human females extend in some terrible way beyond just keeping them as trophies?

There was no time to ponder that question *Tor*, even as *Tor* eyed us, showing off its saliva-dripping teeth, we heard the sound of another creature. I had lived in this

lost world long enough to recognize the roar of a very large flesh-eating dinosaur. Accompanying the second monster's roars were the sounds of plodding footsteps.

In response to those sounds, *Tor* moved away from the fissure, affording us a view of the slowly brightening sky.

Taking advantage of the "King of Beasts" absence, I climbed up the wall of the fissure and peeked out, witnessing a scene from a paleontologist's or zoologist's most ghastly nightmare.

Stalking the giant ape on muscular legs and birdlike feet was a huge carnivorous dinosaur – a *Tyrannosaurus*, I judged, based on its enormous head and diminutive, two-clawed hands. Its scaly body was oriented parallel to the ground, balanced by a thick reptilian tail. Its fangs, seemingly a half-foot long, dripped slime that glistened in the morning's light. From snout to tail tip, it must have measured almost forty feet in length.

*Tor* against *Tyrannosaurus rex*...the "King of Beasts" versus the king of dinosaurs!

With almost human cunning, the gorilla moved first, rushing at that bellowing saurian of the Cretaceous period. Pausing, the great simian reared up on its hind legs, towering in that position above its scaly opponent. It beat its chest in challenge, then slammed a fist against the ground. Watching the giant mammal with apparent fascination, the dinosaur opened and closed its toothy jaws, snapping at the air.

Already the morning's light was spreading over the area, bringing the two sparring monsters into better view.

Then, the very earth seemed to tremble as *Tor* crouched, its leg muscles bulging, and leaped upon the back of the *Tyrannosaurus*. The mighty, hairy arms locked around the dinosaur's neck, *Tor*'s powerful fingers always careful to keep away from that array of steak-knife-like teeth. Tugging with what must have been all its strength, the ape yanked the dinosaur back, the two animals crashing against the earth with such force that I thought another fissure might be created.

"It's a *T. rex*, isn't it?" asked Lynn, all of her senses apparently having come back.

"I think you're right," I told her, my voice barely carrying above the roars of the two battling creatures.

"The most powerful animal ever to walk this Earth," Professor Sara added with authority.

"That's what your paleontology books might say," I corrected him. "But that's

because their authors never met Tor."

We all watched with grim fascination as the two giant beasts engaged in their battle, the *Tyrannosaurus* doing most of its fighting utilizing the strength of its jaws and sharpness of its teeth, Tor employing the cunning of an advanced anthropoid. The ape slammed away at its reptilian foe with its fists, chewed on the tiny forelimbs, tugged at the dinosaur's legs and tail. More than once the toothy carnivore thudded against the ground, but always managed to spring back to its three-toed hind feet.

The entire landscape seemed to shake and roar as the two creatures proceeded with their war, each motivated solely by the desire to destroy the other. Until now Lynn, Marvin and I were relatively safe inside the fissure. That was until the two monsters began to stumble, in their battle, toward where the three of us were hiding.

Still watching at the top of the fissure, I jumped down and put my arm around Lynn, then shoved her and the paleontologist down as far as we could get. Above us the two creatures, locked together in combat, crashed down atop the fissure, both of them too large to fit into the long opening in the ground. In the confusion occurring over our heads, I saw the anthropoid seize the dinosaur's jaws and begin to pull them apart.

Dinosaurian blood, hot and sticky, splashed down on us.

Again Lynn screamed.

Rearing and howling, both from pain and anger, the two beasts rolled away from the fissure, the pale blue of the early-morning sky stretching above us. I heard the sinister noise of crunching bones - I was not yet certain if it was Tor's or the dinosaur's bones - as the ground above us shook.

Then, after a near-deafening howl of pain, there came a terrible silence - one interrupted only by a series of simian grunts.

Once more I climbed to the top of the fissure, hoping along the way that the two animals had mortally wounded one another, and that those grunts were the gorilla's death moans.



"What's happening up there?" asked Marvin, below and behind me. "Who won, ol' Tor or that tyrannosaur...as if I had to ask?"

I felt a chill of terror course through my body as I beheld the scene of carnage. Tor, the so-called King of the monsters of this lost world, was already stomping away from the squirming and dying body of the carnivore and headed toward me. The ape was dripping crimson from a hundred or more bites and lashes, wounded and bleeding but alive!

Although I knew it to be a futile macho gesture, I raised my spear defensively, standing high above the woman I loved and the friend I had recently made. In all truth, however, there was nothing I could do to stop

this shaggy juggernaut. I could only stand there as the ape's face twisted into an expression suggesting some monstrous human grin. Rearing up again on its hind legs, the giant gorilla pounded its chest, proclaiming its victory over the *Tyrannosaurus*. Then, returning to its usual quadrupedal posture, the ape lunged forward.

It was then that I realized, to my horror, that Tor's interest was not in me. The long arm of the creature brushed aside me as though I did not even exist, then dipped down into the fissure. Desperately I stabbed at that hairy arm with my spear, making it jerk only slightly, causing it only an annoying discomfort. Finally, the hand swatted me back

down into the fissure, dazing me.

Only semi-conscious, I could do nothing. Fighting to maintain consciousness, I fought my way back to my feet, seeing that enormous hand – a hand as big as I was – come down into the fissure. I saw Marvin Sara standing at one end of the fissure, terrified and unable to move, as that hand seized Lynn and effortlessly lifted her out of the hole in the ground.

"Burl!" she shrieked as Tor raised her almost naked body to its eye-level, her long hair reflecting the morning light. The beast held the woman like one would hold a beautiful flower. At any moment those fingers might tighten, crushing her, or bring her to the creature's mouth...

"It's too late, son," said the Professor. "Nothing that lives in this lost world can conquer Tor."

"No!" I said, regaining my composure and already climbing the wall of the fissure. "I won't accept that!"

"Impossible," said Marvin, although he must have known I would try anything to save Lynn.

By the time I reached ground level again, Tor was already bounding past the dying hulk of the *Tyrannosaurus* and across the plain, the squirming and kicking body of the woman I loved clutched dearly in one hand.

## C H A P T E R THIRTEEN

Following a monster like Tor, even though the beast was moving faster than we were, was a relatively simple task. The giant ape had left behind a wake of destruction and other blatant signs of its passing. Dust still settled over places where those enormous feet had trod. Boulders had been knocked aside and vegetation torn asunder. There were also the occasional footprints, and then the small animals that had had the misfortune of getting in the anthropoid's way.

Professor Marvin Sara was at my side as we pursued the gorilla, but he accompanied me only reluctantly. Encountering Tor again (which was my intent) was not an event Marvin was anticipating; nor was returning to the Neandertals or, the option least attractive



to him, simply going off somewhere on his own.

We forged ahead for at least a couple hours. In front of us loomed several volcanoes that relentlessly belched their smoke into the morning sky. Good fortune, for once, was on our side. For although we were still following Tor's rather obvious trail, we also happened upon yet another object of our quest.

"There," the Professor finally informed me, pointing toward a thick gathering of trees

and bushes. Through the foliage could be seen what appeared to be the tail of an old biplane, circa World War One. "That's where I left my airplane."

"Looks to me like it's still waiting for you after all these years," I said.

"Good thing the vegetation grows fast around here," said Marvin, leading me toward the downed ship. "Seems to have kept the ol' craft hidden from prying eyes, whether human or animal."

"We'll have to check out the plane later," I told Marvin. "Right now the only thing that concerns me is Lynn and getting her away from that creature."

"I understand fully, Burt," he returned. "At least we know that that the airplane is still here and, from this distance at least, appears to be more or less intact. But this Tor situation...I don't know about that. The cavemen told me that Tor's lair is someplace inside one of those volcanoes. Which one, who can say? And even if we can get inside his domain, how are we going to get Miss Powell away from that monster?"

His saying the word "monster" suddenly stirred up something else in my mind. Several times during our pursuit of Tor - I could not be certain, so I said nothing of my concern to the Professor - I thought I heard that guttural snarl of the Frankenstein Monster. And more than once I perceived, though only for seconds, what looked like a giant manlike form lurking in the shadows or peering from behind rocks or trees. Whenever I focused my vision on those images there was no one there to see, and so I attributed them to an overactive imagination. Nevertheless, I could not escape the gnawing sensation that the Frankenstein Monster was following us.

The last time I had seen the giant, it had gone off in search of Lynn, for whom the Monster had affection and respect. No doubt the Monster was still looking for the woman and perhaps it had witnessed her abduction by the great ape. In my own search for Lynn I had the benefit of Morg's guidance. Without such a guide, the Monster might very well be lost somewhere in this prehistoric land, wandering aimlessly. Having received the gift of immortality from Victor Frankenstein, the brute might well go on searching the lost world forever.

Thus far I said nothing of my fears or suspicions concerning the Frankenstein Monster to the Professor. There was already enough on the poor man's mind and I saw no need to further burden him with the suspicion - and that, for now, was all it was - that a man-created horror might be stalking us.

For a while Tor seemed to vanish from sight. Then, as Marvin and I got nearer to the volcanoes, we saw the ape emerge from behind some foliage and begin to climb up the side of the tallest of the smoking mountains. Tor was too far away for us to see if Lynn was still in its hand, but from the way the beast was scaling the rock, mostly utilizing one hand and both feet, it was plain that there was something in its other hand.



The area we had come to was a familiar one to me. A stream, glistening blue in the sunlight, ran alongside the volcano, the slope of which Tor was still climbing. Near the stream was the lake into which the Lear Jet had splashed down and wherein Lynn and I had had our encounter with the two sea reptiles. I saw the ape disappear into a dark area that must have been some kind of entrance leading into the volcano.

"I'm going to follow Tor into that volcano," I said to Marvin. I knew I was being more foolhardy than courageous, but saw no alternatives.

"I don't know if these ol' limbs of mine

can make such a climb," said Marvin with emotion in his voice.

"I don't expect you to," I said. "Lynn's rescue is my responsibility now. I don't expect you to risk your own life in what may turn out to be an impossible rescue mission. Go back to the plane and check it out. If Lynn and I get away from Tor, we'll meet you there."

The Professor smiled, his mustache and beard bristling. "I hope you will, my boy. Indeed I do. And good luck."

Reaching out a skinny arm, Marvin shook my hand with all the might his old

body could muster. Then, turning on wobbly legs, the old man hobbled back in the direction of his airplane.

I stood at the base of the volcano's slope, driven there by the knowledge that Tor was somewhere inside and the hope that Lynn was still alive. I was alone now, the Professor having departed at least a half hour ago. Alone, except for that haunting feeling that eyes were watching me from afar – yellow eyes transplanted into a monstrous head by an over-ambitious scientist more than two centuries ago.

Trying not to think of Frankenstein's Monster, I began my climb of the rocky slope. Luckily the slope was not very steep and, through having to survive in this lost world, climbing was becoming to me as natural as it was to a monkey. Within minutes my climb brought me to the vast entrance into which I had seen Tor disappear.

The place was hot, almost unbearably so, and a cloud of smoke permeated the air and stung my eyes.

Tor, King of Beasts sat upon a big rock near the core of the volcano, which bubbled and hissed like some enormous primal stewpot. The ape then arose to stand, first on all fours, then on his hind legs, making a fist and roaring toward the sky that shown from beyond the volcano's cone. I saw a flock of prehistoric vultures scatter as his growls issued up and out of the volcano.

Looking around, my heart raced as I spotted a familiar blonde and shapely figure perched atop a rocky ledge. Lynn spotted me almost immediately as I made my way along another path of stone, trying my best to keep out of Tor's field of vision and also away from the heat of that steaming core. Even from this distance I could see a look of hope on Lynn's face. Not wanting to alert the ape of my presence, I motioned for Lynn to remain quiet.

Completing his one-ape "concert," Tor, still not noticing me, plopped down on all fours, then ambled toward its lovely blonde trophy. Reaching out, it again had her trapped within its enormous hand. Then, sitting down on a flat rocky surface, the gorilla began to inspect its lovely human flower, fingering her yellow hair and always seemingly careful not to poke her too hard. Seemingly Tor was trying not to hurt the woman, but only inspect her – so physically unlike the others the beast had captured in the past – with its remarkably sophisticated sense of curiosity.

Throughout this ordeal, Lynn remained calm, did not scream or call out to me or

make even the slightest sound. Her old and familiar courage had returned, and she was facing this horror as she had faced so many others in her recent past. This suggested to me that, at last, no traces of the Neanderthals' mind-numbing drugs remained in Lynn's system.

Finally, its initial fascination with Lynn apparently wearing off, Tor set her back down on the ledge. Still weary and wounded after its battle with the *Tyrannosaurus*, Tor, the so-called King of Beasts, climbed to a high place inside the volcano and fell into a sound sleep.

My chance, I believed, had arrived!

Careful not to make even the slightest sound that might interrupt the great simian's repast, I made my way along the rough contours of stone and reached out for my beloved Lynn. She smiled warmly as I helped her off her ledge. I felt her body quivering as I pulled it down close to me. In that moment I wanted to take her in my arms and make love to her, but there was no time. At any moment our enormous "host" might awaken. Kissing Lynn briefly but with meaning, I grabbed her hand and quietly led her along the rocks. Gesturing for Lynn to look up toward the cone, we saw the welcome blue of the sky.

Tor's enormous chest rose and fell as we made our precarious way up the wall of stone. The beast's snoring echoed through the rocky chamber and we could feel the heat of the animal's breath.

Climbing as rapidly as was humanly possible, we finally reached the rim of the cone, pulling ourselves out of the volcano, the



heat from that molten core still assaulting us from behind.

The stream that wound below us through the mountains seemed also to beckon us. As we descended the volcano's slope, we could hear the babbling of the water and, as we got closer, feel the cool spray of wind rushing over the stream. It seemed as if we had escaped from horror and into a world of peace and beauty. What happened next, however, dispelled any such foolish notions. There was no escaping the violence of this savage world!

Three gigantic pterosaurs, significantly bigger than the *Pteranodon* that had buzzed our jet, swooped down at us from the sky. From their size and crestless heads I identified them as of the genus *Quetzalcoatlus*, whose bones had been found in recent decades in Texas. Screaming like harpies, the monsters – their wingspans in excess of thirty feet in length – flew overhead, sometimes flapping their great wings, sometimes riding the wind currents.

So swift were the flying monsters that, before I had the chance to raise my spear, the

largest of group snatched Lynn from the ground in its talons. She fought to free herself as the winged creature, its lightweight body struggling against Lynn's weight, managed to lift her into the air.

"Lynn—!" I cried out to her, raising my spear, trying to aim the weapon before the giant pterosaur gained too much altitude.

But the other two pterosaurs were already diving for me, shrieking, hind claws reaching down for me. I knew that if I did not act fast, the monsters would kill me, and that Lynn would be surely doomed.

I jabbed my spear upwards, again and again, as the first of my airborne attackers descended for the kill. The stone point cut through the chest, spilling reptilian blood. The animal screamed from the pain, trying to free itself from the impaling shaft. Twisting the spear and keeping it pressed within the pterosaur's chest, I managed to force my opponent to the ground. Its long back snapped at me as I finally yanked the spear free, part of the animal's heart still stuck to it, and wielded it against my second attacker.

From above, Lynn screamed.

Quickly, I thrust my spear through the gut of the other *Quetzalcoatlus*, spilling blood and forcing down the monster. Then, with a violent turn of the spearhead, I withdrew the shaft, bringing with it a mass of entrails.

Looking up, I could see that the pterosaur bearing Lynn in its hind claws had not yet gained much altitude. These were lightly built animals not designed for carrying off such weighty prey. Dropping my spear, I leaped into space and onto the largest of the *Quetzalcoatlus* group, grasping its finely furred skin. Rapidly my added weight brought the animal back to the ground. Still, however, those claws held tenaciously their human victim.

One hand still clutching the pterosaur's body, I fished out my Bowie knife, cutting forcibly through the monster's elongated neck and severing its head.

A half-minute later the hind claws relaxed, releasing their burden.

This time Lynn and I kissed with more passion. We had survived yet another encounter with death and were together once again.

"We found Marvin's plane," I told her.

"Then why are we standing around here making out like two teenagers?" she said, smiling.

My arm around her waist, we set off away from Tor's volcano.

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Professor Marvin Sara was waiting for us at the airplane, a big smile on his wizened and bearded face.

"I don't see how you ever managed to get away from the ol' King of Beasts," he laughed, holding out his hands to receive both Lynn and me, "but obviously — you did!"

"Even a brute like Tor has to sleep sometime," Lynn said, back to her "old self."

Clasping Marvin's hands, Lynn and I turned our attention to the plane, much of its tail section having already been cleared of the vegetation that had overgrown it since its crashed landing so many decades ago.

"I did the best I could of removing some of those branches," said Marvin. "But there's only so much work an old man like me can do before he winds down."

"You did fine," I told him. "The three of us should have the rest of the plane free in no time at all."

"It's so hard to believe," said Lynn, marveling at the craft. "It really is a plane. That means there's at least a slight chance we might get off this awful plateau."

"More than just a slight chance," I corrected her. "A definite possibility. But then, what's more difficult to believe — the existence of this craft or of a world in which the rules of time and geography have all gone haywire?"

Even though the plane was still mostly hidden by foliage, what could be seen of it seemed to be in a remarkable state of preservation — another effect of the weird temporal properties of the lost world. If only the engine had been preserved by those same improbable forces that allowed Neandertals, pelycosaurs and dinosaurs and other anachronistic beings to live together, whereas in the outside world they were separated by sometimes hundreds of millions of years and also vast differences.

"But even if the airplane is, by some miraculous side effect of the bending of those rules, what are we going to use for fuel?" asked the Professor. "Remember, I was almost out of fuel when I landed here. Even if it didn't leak out after all these years, there wasn't enough in the tank to get us away from here and to some civilized place. And, personally, I don't see any gas stations around here where we can fill up the tank."

With a grin spreading across my face, I pointed toward the lake. In the distance, several giant aquatic reptiles swam, their

motions rhythmic and graceful.

"The plane that brought Lynn and me to this plateau is resting down there," I said, "at the bottom of the lake. I suspect it still contains plenty of fuel. I don't know how your 'ancient' craft will take to our modern fuel, but right now it's the only option we have. All I have to do is retrieve a supply of fuel from our plane and..."

Lynn cast a fearful look toward me. Taking my hands, she pressed her cheek against mine, her body against my chest. I slipped a hand against her bare back, under her great mane of golden hair, and felt her tremble.

"What is it?" I asked her.

"Not the lake," she said. "You know what happened last time. Those awful reptiles. And what happened to Abu..."

I winced, recalling those events that were still etched so vividly in Lynn's and my own memories. "I know it's going to be dangerous," I said. "But just about everything we do on this plateau is dangerous. But frankly it's the only way, our only chance. With a giant ape having a 'crush' on you, with those Neandertals after us and its chief rivaling the ape for your affections, with dinosaurs and pterosaurs attacking us at virtually every turn, not to mention the Frankenstein Monster lurking about, I think the risk is a relatively small one. Bottom line: we must do whatever it takes, no matter the danger, to get off this plateau."

But Lynn was not listening to my concluding words. Her eyes had reacted with a start as I mentioned my greatest adversary. "The Frankenstein Monster?"

I nodded and, speaking rapidly, gave Lynn a truncated version of my most recent experiences with the Monster.

"I suppose you're right," she finally said, although with reluctance.

"Then let's free the ol' airplane and see what kind of shape she's in," said Marvin enthusiastically.

Without further delay, the three of us went to work, chopping and cutting away the branches and leaves using our weapons as tools. In less than an hour, working together efficiently and without taking a rest, we completely exposed Professor Sara's aircraft.

The plane was the Professor informed me, a de Havilland Tiger Moth, apparently a real prized ship in its World War One heyday. The aircraft was a two-seater, but I felt confident that the three of us could all squeeze, without any real discomfort, into the open cockpits. All in all, except for some



scraped- or chipped-off paint, the plane – as I had hoped and even expected – seemed to be in reasonably good condition.

"You neglected to tell me about those," I said with a smile, pointing toward the front cockpit and the twin set of Vickers machineguns mounted there.

"Oh, those," replied Marvin, grinning sheepishly. "I guess I came prepared. Unfortunately I never took the time to learn how to use those things."

"Then there should be plenty of ammunition," I assumed.

"Funny, but it's been so long, I actually forgot about those machineguns," he said. "I suppose I thought they might come in handy, maybe against flying reptiles if I had any trouble with them in the sky. But forget those guns for the moment and take a look at that wing."

The left wing of the Tiger Moth was indeed torn to shreds, both on top and bottom. Otherwise the ship, superficially at least, seemed to be quite intact. The Professor had made a quite commendable crash landing.

An idea suddenly came to me. "That should be rather easy to fix," I mused.

Lynn and Marvin looked at me as if I had just said something stupid.

"You two stay here and watch the plane. I won't be long," I said, hurriedly slipping away in the direction from which Lynn and I had just come.

When I returned to my friends and the biplane, I was dragging along with me the giant carcass of one of a *Quetzalcoatlus*, the blood on its chest, the result of my spear thrusts, finally having dried.

"There're two more of these flying dragons back where we left them," I said to the Professor. "Their wings are strong, though lightweight, reinforced by tough fibers. I think between the three of them we should be able to fashion a temporary wing that will serve our purposes, at least long enough to get off this plateau."

Marvin deliberated the possibility, stroking the tip of his long beard. "You know, my boy, it just might work. If those wings could keep animals like that aloft, maybe they'll do the same for us."

Leaving the Professor with his airplane, Lynn and I rushed back to the site where we had encountered the *Quetzalcoatlus* flock and dragged back the remaining two carcasses.

"You and Lynn start working on that wing," I instructed Marvin. "In the meantime,

I'll do what I can about getting this old mechanical bird of yours refueled."

Once again, I set off alone, jogging back in the direction from which I had originally come. Luckily, in fleeing from the Neandertals' cave and later pursuing Tor and Lynn I had actually been traveling in the general direction from which we had started our adventure in this lost world. By nightfall I reached the tiny cave where our raft was still safely in storage. Underneath the raft I found one of the last remaining cans of beans and also the final length of rope. Opening the metal container with my Bowie knife, I feasted for the first time in days on "modern" food, then retired for the night.

Just after sunrise, I dragged the raft onto the beach, taking the rope with me, and set out across the misty lake. There was no guesswork as to where the Lear Jet had gone down; that location had been permanently burned into my consciousness. Occasionally I beheld a reptilian head break the surface of the water as I paddled toward my destination. Somehow I managed to complete my raft journey unmolested by predacious saurians.

Looking down into the clear waters, I could see the dark shape of the Lear Jet, seemingly beckoning to me. Taking an enormous gulp of air, I dove into the cool waters, plunging downward toward that shape. I could see the silent and motionless bulk of the ship resting at the lake's bottom like some metallic corpse.

The door was still open.

Holding my breath, I swam inside the plane, as a school of peculiar-looking armored fishes swam outside of the metal bulk. Quickly I searched through the storage area of the craft and discovered two watertight drums with lettering identifying them as containing spare fuel. Pulling the drums free, I edged them out the door of the plane and let them float to the lake's surface.

My lungs feeling as if about to explode, I swam upwards after the drums. With the rope I had brought, I tied attached the drums to the rear end of the raft. Then I remembered something else – something perceived from the corner of my eye while releasing the fuel drums from the plane. Again I dove into the water and reentered the Lear Jet. Again I tugged free a watertight metal drum, this one, however, not containing airplane fuel. Even as I swam back toward the surface, the drum ascending ahead of me, the refracting light of the morning sun illuminated the curved metallic surface, revealing the words printed there: "Danger. Explosives."

I was not sure why this container of explosives had been stored on the jet. It was certainly not among the items that I was taking back with me to Ingolstadt and I doubted its presence in the storage hold was not something accidentally left there from some previous flight. Most likely the terrorist Abu had smuggled the container on board, probably with the cooperation of the pilot whom he had under his control. Whatever the explosives' intended use and how the container happened to be on my rented plane, I was not complaining. I might have a use for them, and one far more noble than Abu's insane political cause.

Tying that last container to the back of my inflated craft, I started to climb aboard again when, without warning, something big and heavy slammed against my right leg, sending a pain coursing through that limb. Still half submerged in water, I instinctively reached into the raft and grabbed my spear. Looking down I could see the thing that had collided with me. It was making a plunge and then a turn in the water below me, coming back for a second encounter, probably for the kill. As it got nearer I could see that this monster had the general shape and appearance of a crocodile – albeit, one approaching or possibly surpassing fifty feet in length. The reptile (I believe *Deinosuchus* was its scientific name) was cutting rapidly through the water, propelled mainly by the lashing of its powerful tail.

Starting to climb back inside the raft, I saw that the monster was following me. As I rolled back into my rubber craft, the enormous head of the creature, possibly six feet in length, erupted from the water, the bulbous and scaly snout striking like a battering ram against my chest, knocking me back into the lake. No bones broken at least, I plunged rapidly down through the water, my spear still held dearly in one hand.

Underwater again, the monster crocodilian instantly spotted me. It swam toward me, its enormous jaws open, the wide array of teeth ready to feast. But the enormous bulk of this reptilian horror proved to be its greatest disadvantage. Able to move faster, I jabbed my spear at the thick-skinned side of the animal, its armored scutes protecting it from my attack. Continuing my assault, I thrust my weapon again, this time at the softer peritonea, at the throat area, piercing the scaly tissue and releasing a flow of crimson to wriggle through the lake water. The monster's claws lashed at me, broke my skin, opening flesh so that my own blood flowed out and mingled with its own. The

snapping jaws of the animal shot towards me. Before they could do their intended work, my spear, like a primitive torpedo, poked through one eye and then the other, blinding my giant foe.

Unable to see its prey any longer, the *Deinosuchus* nevertheless continued to fight on, its jaws trying to clamp down on everything within biting range. The huge body turned and twisted, rotating twice underwater, before its gut area caught the full and final thrust of my spear.

Yanking out my very trusty weapon, I shot back up to the surface, leaving my dying opponent to drift down to the bottom.

Aching from the wounds inflicted by the prehistoric crocodile, gasping for air and coughing out water, I hoisted myself back on board the raft, in worse physical shape but still alive. Wasting no time in relaxation, I started to row back in the direction I knew Lynn and the Professor would be waiting. I had, once more, lost a considerable amount of blood; furthermore, the crocodile's attack had left me physically tired. Rowing, therefore, was more difficult than it should have been. But row I did, my craft pulling the three floating containers, until, in the distance, I could see Lynn, the Professor and the airplane.

Lynn gasped upon noticing my wounds as, like some returning warrior, I strode back onto dry land.

"Burt," she said in a loud voice, "what happened to you?"

"Oh, just the usual thing," I said. There was no need for further details. Both Lynn and Marvin Sara had lived on this plateau long enough to know that danger and bloodshed were common hazards in this lost world.

It was soothing having Lynn comfort me, her own proximity seemingly nullifying its own curative powers.

"Here, let me help," said Marvin, plucking a few prehistoric plants from the ground, and then holding them out to me. "Some of these herbs have remarkable healing properties."

Marvin proved his claim by applying the herbs to my open wounds. As he predicted, the plants did, in fact, retard and eventually stop the bleeding while, at the same time, easing my pain. Still, I liked to believe that holding Lynn's almost naked body against my own body conveyed more medicinal power than all of Marvin's herbs.

Looking at the plane, I saw that the damaged wing had been replaced by an ersatz

one made from the fibrous wing membrane of the three dead pterosaurs. "You two did a good repair job while I was away."

"We stopped only to eat and rest," boasted Marvin.

"I may have discovered a new profession for myself," said Lynn, "if I ever got out of the mad doctor's assistant business."

"Then," I said, "let's see how the old crate takes that fuel."

The three of us walked to the raft and into the shallow part of the lake, each taking one of the containers. After rolling the containers back to the Tiger Moth, I opened one with my Bowie knife. Then, taking our time and being careful not to spill any of the precious liquid, we lifted the heavy gas containers together, then proceeded to empty all the fuel they contained into the biplane's tank.

From somewhere behind us, I thought I heard a scurrying sound coming from the beach. Continuing to pour the fuel, I – foolishly – paid no heed to the noises.

Our refueling task completed, I turned away from the plane to make sure our raft was still safely where we had left it. Lynn and the Professor were still looking toward the Tiger Moth and, therefore, were not yet aware of the sight confronting me. When they finally did turn around, the triumphant smiles on their faces instantly altered to looks of shock. Lynn's tanned face paled and Marvin's eyes bulged in their sockets.

Stepping into view from behind some rocks, crowding onto the beach, was Kaz and his Neandertals. The warriors stood with raised spears and axes. Animal teeth, the trophies of earlier hunts now strung on thongs about their necks, showing white and yellow in the sunlight. Their chief glared at me, then flashed a toothy grin in Lynn's direction, his gaze roaming up and down her shapely body.

But seeing this horde, obviously bent upon revenge and violence, did not constitute our greatest horror. Rather, it was the thing now striding into their midst, a creature that was clearly on their, instead of our side. Stomping across the sand of the beach upon its raised black boots, a hideous grin turning its black lips, was the Frankenstein Monster.

"My lord!" gasped Professor Sara, behind me.

As the Monster halted, Kaz and his band dropped to their knees, bowing down to the beast and chanting in much the same way that they had to the mummified cave bear head. Indeed, the giant was standing like some alien

deity among these primitive people, its yellow skin bright in the sunlight. Plainly the Monster was enjoying all of this adulation. I thought for a moment that the stitched scar on its right cheek would burst open as the creature looked with pride at Lynn.

"It really does exist!" the Professor spoke again.

The Monster's yellow orbs shifted in their deep sockets, noting the man who had just spoken, then looking at the blonde-haired woman, finally staring at me.

"So...Doctor Winslow," the Monster stated, showing its uneven teeth, "again we are...face...to face."

"If I had a torch right now, your face would be its target," I threatened.

"But you don't...have a torch," it said. "That is...too bad...for you."

"You said you were going after those savages," I said. "Because they had taken Lynn away."

Frowning, the Monster replied, "She was...not with them. You had already taken...her away. Now she...is here. And these strange humans...are my friends."

"Friends? Savages who bow down to you, who don't know what you really are?"

"To them...I am...strong...powerful...different...a god!"

I could almost laugh at the irony of the situation. The Frankenstein Monster, a fiend and a devil that rivaled the demons of Hell in its evil, accepted as a deity. I felt as if the blood was boiling in my veins.

Kaz got up from his knees and walked timidly up to the Monster, speaking words that, if translated, were probably those of respect and homage.

Marvin translated. "He says that the Monster is surely their true god, more powerful than the cave bear, a creature of awesome appearance and might."

It was easy to see why the Neandertals had accepted the Monster as their deity. It towered over even the tallest of them, looking like something out of their most terrible nightmares, and had the strength of many of them combined. Had these primitives been worshipping Satan they could not have made a worse choice.

"People have...hated me...feared me...tortured me...for too long," the Monster said. "Everywhere I went I was...hurt...made to kill...used like a pawn by...evil men. At last, in this savage...place, I have found acceptance. I am treated...well. These strange people...worship me. I...like that."



spotless skin.

The Neanderthal's check never violated Lynn's.

In a second, the stitched hand of Frankenstein's Monster was on his shoulder, spinning the Chief around to stare in terror into those watery yellow eyes. Then the Monster's other hand grasped Kaz's neck, squeezing until the "caveman's" own eyes nearly popped out from beneath his sloping brow. Kaz coughed a few times, blood spurting from his mouth, before the stiffly moving arm jerked and sent him crashing against the ground. The imprint of the Monster's fingers around his throat served as a final warning to the other Neanderthals.

"No one... touches her," the Monster stated boldly, looking toward the group of hunters. Then the giant stared commandingly at Marvin. "You... speak their speak. Tell them... what I just said."

Without question, Marvin did as he was instructed, a low grumbling then issuing from the crowd.

"Now..." the Monster began again, "we will go back to... the cave. All of us." Smiling ghoulishly, the Frankenstein Monster stomped up to Lynn. Her face showed fear, as was natural when in the brute's presence, but also compassion for the being. It touched her hair with a gentleness I did not think possible for such a creature, then grasped her cheek.

Lynn nodded and smiled.

Again acting upon instinct only, I lunged for the beast with my spear, as if it could have caused the Monster any harm, but was promptly knocked down against the earth by my Neanderthal captors. In a moment I was surrounded by warriors, their weapons held high above me.

"Tell them..." the Monster commanded the Professor, "that Dr. Winslow must... not die."

Again the paleontologist spoke to the savages. In compliance, the warriors stepped away from me, lowering their weapons and then bowing again to their monstrous god. By now the fact that their chieftain was dead was either forgotten or ignored.

"You, Dr. Winslow... must live... as long as I live."

The Professor helped me back to my feet. By the time I regained my footing, the Neanderthals, probably in fear of the Monster, were treating me as if I did not even exist.

"We go now," the Monster spoke again, this time only to Lynn. "Too far for you to walk." That stated, the beast bore an unresisting Lynn into its powerful arms.

As the Monster spoke, the expression on Kaz's face changed. His attention, I could see, was more on Lynn than on his tribe's ugly new god. Her beauty seemed to hold the man transfixed. I saw the Chief's burly hands begin to twitch, nervously.

At last, Kaz blurted something out in his native tongue.

"Kaz says that his mate, Morg, is dead," Marvin translated, "that she accidentally fell on her spear."

"Right," I said under my breath, "accidentally."

"Now he wants Miss Powell to be his

mate, to replace Morg."

"Hmmm," I said, "sounds to me like it's really a 'buyer's market' around here. Does he really think I'll let him even try--?"

Before I could even finish, Kaz's hands reached out for Lynn.

Instantly my hands snapped up, my spear ready to hurl at the Chief, when a half dozen Neanderthal warriors grabbed me.

Kaz seized Lynn's body savagely. She squirmed, punched and kicked to get away, but there was no escaping his superior physical strength. The man pressed his hairy face close to her cheek, getting nearer to her

The Monster led the way. Closely I watched the brute from behind, its long ebony hair moving in the wind as it trudged along, back in the direction of the Neanderthals' cave. In its arms, carried like some weightless unclothed doll, was Lynn.

Looking back at me, she said, "I'll be okay, Bart. He won't hurt me."

Indeed we must have been the most bizarre group ever to walk this planet — a Monster created by science carrying a naked "jungle girl," leading a tribe of Neanderthals, plus a more than century-old paleontologist and one American scientist now more resembling some pulp-fiction jungle lord!

Even as we walked, following the Monster's lead, my mind was racing, trying desperately to devise some new plan of escape. My thoughts were interrupted by sounds from behind — by now all too familiar noises, as I heard the clump of heavy footsteps and then that terrible, deep-throated growl. Then an enormous shadow fell upon us, one with an unmistakable, almost humanoid outline.

Stopping abruptly and turning, the Neanderthals looked up, then to their stitched-together god for protection.

Still holding its willing burden, the Monster turned, jerked its head upwards. Never before had I beheld the look of pure terror now spreading across the giant's visage.

Spinning around, as did Marvin, I knew what I would find, looming overhead some five times taller than me.

Tearing up foliage, its eyes blazing with rage, was the giant gorilla Tor. We had taken away its latest prize and the monster was here to get her back.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

**"Tor! Tor! Tor!"**

Upon seeing the colossal anthropoid, the Neanderthals were jabbering and shrieking its name, no doubt hoping — no praying — that their current deity, the Frankenstein Monster, would somehow rescue them all from Tor's mammoth clutches.

"Well," I said, looking back at the Monster, in whose long arms my beloved was still nestled, "what do you plan to do now, Mr. 'God'? I think your 'flock' is expecting some kind of miracle."

The gorilla crashed forward, its globe-like eyes focusing upon the golden-haired 'goddess' held by the unsightly 'god.' She

looked at me, made an effort to jump free of the Monster's hold on her, failing.

My spear and Bowie knife were ready for action, but I knew neither of them would have any effect against the King of Beasts. If only I had not lost that rifle; several well-placed bullets between the eyes may have pierced the ape's brain and brought the monster down.

"I think the Monster may have met its match," I said to Marvin Sara, "at least several times over."

Tor seemed to be unconcerned with any of us save his purloined human treasure. His legs, like hairy tree trunks, plodded past us, his feet making loud thudding sounds against the ground.

The Neanderthals simply backed away, keeping as much distance as needed to be kept between them and the shaggy behemoth.

Stepping backwards, still carrying Lynn, the Frankenstein Monster could only gape in awe at this thing towering over its artificially made body, almost reaching into the sky. Nevertheless, the Monster showed no fear. Dark lips twisting, the brute snarled with hatred and defiance at the gigantic simian.

Tor, of course, snarled back, rearing up on its shaggy hind legs. Roared and grunted. Then the mighty ape came back down on all fours and, suddenly and quickly, reached out for the woman in the Monster's arms. The Frankenstein creature was knocked back by the force of Tor's connecting hand, its arms briefly relaxing, allowing Lynn's body to fall hard against the ground. I saw her head strike one of the many rocks littering the landscape, heard a quick moan and saw those blue eyes shut.

Realizing what it had done to Lynn, the Frankenstein Monster darted forward, its own mighty arms wrapping themselves around Tor's wrist and squeezing with its electrically induced superhuman strength.

A rather stupid, almost human expression seemed to move Tor's features. Then the giant ape casually slapped the Monster aside as a human being might swat a fly.

When the Monster regained its senses and was again standing tall upon its black boots, Tor was already hurrying away and across the plain with Lynn once more in its grasp.

Tor gone, the Neanderthals finally regained their composure and cast questioning gazes at the man-made being they had chosen to worship. Their 'god' had miserably failed to protect them from the ape. Tor was the vengeful "force of nature" that governed their lives, made them offer human sacrifices and kept their existence shrouded by fear. The

being they worshipped should have had the godly power to vanquish the beast and erase it from their lives. But the Monster did nothing to avert or destroy the creature. Nothing!

With a collective howl that sounded like the wailing of a pack of dire wolves, the Neanderthals turned their angry attention to the Frankenstein Monster. Then, like a parody of one of the angry mobs that had pursued the Monster on its native soil, the savages pounded its body with their weapons.

"If we're going to save ourselves now," I told Marvin, "I think we'll be needing the Monster's aid. God save me, I'm going to try and help the brute!"

As quickly as the Neanderthals attacked, the Monster fought back, lashing out at its prehistoric enemies with pounding fists and stiffly swinging arms. A large yellow hand cut through flesh and bone, releasing blood. The Monster growled as the attackers, even though some of their number had already died, continued their onslaught.

Though reluctant, I joined in the battle, my spear cutting through shaggy flesh.

Neanderthals fell into bleeding heaps as the Monster and I — for once unopposed allies — utilized our best fighting skills as a team. With me, the best skills included speed and a knowledge of modern fighting techniques. In the Monster's case it was simply raw power coupled with unbridled anger.

As the battle approached an ending, there were but three Neanderthal warrior left alive. One of these groaned and spat blood as my spear impaled his heart. The remaining two were quickly seized by the Monster, one in each hand, and then slammed together with killing force.

Together the Monster and I stepped away from the mound of Neanderthal corpses who's blood was now staining the ground.

The Frankenstein creature looked toward me, the metal electrodes at its temples reflecting the sunlight. There was a look of curiosity on that patched-together face.

"You...helped me, Winslow," the Monster said. "Why?"

"Make no mistake about it," I said, looking up at the beast and wiping a trail of saliva mixed with blood from my mouth, "I'm not proud of this...victory." This carnage we did here was so that we could survive. And save Lynn. And so, for now at least, the both of us must remain alive. Together, possibly, we may be able to rescue Lynn Powell from that...monster."

There was still confusion registering on the Monster's face. It held out its hands and

inspected them, turning the yellow palms up.  
 "How can we...save her?" the creature asked.

I led the Monster and the Professor back to the airplane. Beside it was the container identified as containing some kind of explosives.

"Tor was headed back in the direction of that volcano when he carried off Lynn," I said. "That volcano – the tallest one of the group – is the ape's domain. We must go back to that volcano, that's where we'll find Lynn."

More perplexity on the Monster's face. "But..." the giant started, "how can we get... her away from that... that...?"

It was difficult for me to grasp that I was actually having a conversation with Frankenstein's Monster. Under different circumstances I might even have laughed at the absurdity of it all.

By now, a kind of sparkle had appeared in Marvin's eyes, and I guessed that he understood the plan I was formulating as I spoke.

"Tor must be destroyed," I pronounced. "There's no other way to save her from whatever bestial plan Tor has in store for her. And it's our job to bring about that destruction."

Looking at me with suspicion and disbelief, the Monster asked simply, "How?"

"Our weapons – this spear and my knife – are useless against that creature," I said. Even your own unnatural strength, which can tear down walls and fight off ten men at once, is useless against a monster like that."

"Then... what...?"

"But think of it," I went on, "think of what Tor's hair is. It's a volcano."

"An active volcano, I might add," Marvin volunteered, "that will someday erupt."

"Hmmpf!" snarled the Monster. "Someday..."

"Tor could be easily destroyed during a volcanic eruption," I said, "buried in molten lava. If we could make that happen, and grab Lynn in time..."

As I spoke, I recalled some of the myriad stories I had read or movies that I had seen set in prehistoric environments where dinosaurs, mammoths, cavemen and other extinct animals roamed and where also existed an active volcano. Almost always in those fictional presentations, the volcano inevitably erupted, sometimes accompanied by an earthquake, at the climax, destroying everything. How I wished that our situation

could be like one of those stories. Unfortunately our experiences in this lost world were terribly real. Our volcanoes had undoubtedly been around for millions of years and had not erupted yet. Perhaps they would wait another million or more years. We could not wait that long.

"But since our volcano won't erupt on its own," said Professor Sara, predicting what I was about to say, "we must..."

"Make it erupt..." stated the Monster.

"Indeed," I said, for the first time in my life actually smiling at the creature. "And that, my hideous accomplice, is where you come in."

"Me...?"

I nodded. "Yes," I started to explain, "there are streams that flow outside those volcanoes, including Tor's private one. If we could divert one of those streams inside Tor's volcano, create steam as the water rushes into the boiling core, that steam could prompt an eruption. And Tor, if all goes as planned, will be trapped inside."

"How... will we make the water go inside?" asked the Monster.

Marvin smiled and nodded toward the metal drum that had not yet been opened.

"Yes," I said. "A drum that size should contain enough explosives to blow a hole in the side of the volcano. If we set the charges just right, calculate the proper angles and all, we should be able to turn the course of one of those streams inside."

"What must... I do?"

"Only you," I said to the giant, "possess the strength to carry the drum up the volcano's slope. I will tell you what to do with it after reaching your destination. But you must do it quickly – before Tor does anything to Lynn."

"Well?" asked the paleontologist. "Will you do it?"

Frankenstein's Monster required no time to make its decision. "I will... carry the container up the... mountain of fire. But after she is safe..." said the Monster, staring down into my eyes, "you will remain here... with us."



Those last words made me shudder, sending a thrill of fear running along my spine. I said nothing in response, but simply looked toward Marvin.

"Good luck, Dr. Winslow," the Professor said. Then, looking toward the Monster, he added, "And to you, also."

"You, Marvin," will remain behind and guard the plane.

"That seems to be quickly becoming my new and permanent occupation."

"The plane," the Monster said, looking at the aircraft and then back at me. "You will not... fly away with the old man. You will not... leave me here alone... if I do what you ask."

There was no time to argue with the Monster. I certainly had no intention of Lynn remaining on this lost plateau in the company of the brute. Besides, I still had plans on returning the Monster's ugly carcass to Germany for dissection. "I promise I won't leave you here," I said, meaning my words. "Where you are, that's where I will be."

I rolled the heavy drum up to the Monster's boots. Then, working hastily, I picked up some dried vegetation and rigged up a lengthy fuse. I chopped a tiny hole into the drum with my Bowie knife, then inserted

the fuse through that opening. Tearing off small pieces of Marvin's tunic, I vined them to a half dozen pieces of wood, and then scraped the cloths against the inner residue of the now empty fuel drums. As there were no more matches to be had, I quickly employed my newly mastered skill of making fire and, producing some sparks, proceeded to set ablaze the first of my ersatz torches.

"No!" the Monster roared, its eyes reacting with a start to the flames. It threw up an arm to shield itself from the fire.

"Don't worry," I said, keeping the first of my six torches away from the giant, "this time the fire isn't for you. But we'll need these flames to set off the fuse, when the proper moment comes.

"Just...keep it away from me!" the Monster said threateningly.

Wasting no more time, the Frankenstein Monster and I marched off toward the volcano domain of Tor.

Approaching Tor's volcano, the Monster and I could see the awesome simian figure standing at the rim of the crater. The smoke pouring from the crater did not seem to have any effect upon the ape, as if it had grown immune to such air pollution over the years. Holding the kicking figure of Lynn in one hand, Tor struck its chest with the other and roared defiantly to the sky.

For about a minute, Tor vented his vocal rage at a small herd of mastodons walking along down below, the elephant-like creatures scattering at the deafening sound of its voice. Then, the hairy mammals having passed by, the gorilla vanished down inside the crater.

"Now," I instructed the Monster.

Transferring the dwindling fire of my first torch to the second, I cast the first aside and led the Monster to the base of the volcano. Without stopping we began our ascent up the slope. All the while I kept looking back toward the stream, trying to remember what I had learned in my college physics courses, making mental calculations. Finally we reached a height and position on the slope where I felt fairly confident I could direct, within reason, the force of our intended explosion.

"Here," I said, pointing to a kind of crevice in the rocky wall and setting aside the second torch. "Set the drum down here. If we explode this here, the stream water should - if I've figured correctly - rush in and strike the bottom of the crater and the molten core. Then, again if my theory is correct, a chain reaction will be set off by which the volcano

will then erupt under its own power."

As I instructed, the Monster stooped over and shoved the container into the niche in the slope. "There..." the beast said, standing tall again. "Now we rescue... *Aer*."

"No, it's not that simple," I said. "I'll enter the crater alone. You move too slowly to come along and will only get in the way. It's better anyway that you stay here and guard this drum. If anything happens to these explosives, everything - including Lynn's life - will be lost."

The Monster glared at me. Obviously it wanted to accompany me on the actual rescue mission. But the expression on its pale face told me that it understood what had to be done.

The second torch was already dying and so I transferred its fire to the third. Then I stuck that torch between some of the rocks on the slope. That done, I stuck the remaining unit torches into the slope in like fashion.

"It's important that the fire keeps going until I return from the crater," I told the Monster, "because we'll need it for the fuse. If that torch starts to die out, light another one. Don't worry. If you're careful and just grab onto the bottom of the shaft, the fire won't harm you."

The creature looked at me with apprehension and snarled. There was no time left to argue with the brute.

Leaving the Frankenstein Monster on the slope, I climbed down into the volcano. The heat from the core, just as I had remembered it, was almost unbearable. Already I could hear the giant ape's grunts, resounding and echoing throughout the enormous chamber.

Below me, the volcanic core belched and hissed with hellish heat. Dark smoke arose to issue out through the crater and into the sky. My lungs screamed to breathe air not polluted by sulfur. The heat and smoke made my eyes water and smart, making seeing things more difficult.

I dropped down to a ledge overlooking that cauldron of boiling death.

Lynn, I could see, was still in Tor's hand, unable to move as the beast played with her delicate body. She turned in my direction, but with all the heat and smoke, I could not be certain that she saw me. Nevertheless, I motioned to her, trying to convey the message that she should remain quiet.

Tor, apparently, had not yet noticed my presence. He plopped back stop a flat, throne-like rock, then set Lynn down on a narrow ledge to look at his prize. If only the ape would fall asleep again, how much easier this

operation would be. But Tor remained awake, obviously fascinated by the look of its tiny, golden-haired captive.

Lynn cowered against the rock wall, trying to keep as far away from the beast as she could, although given Tor's size and proximity it hardly mattered. She gave me a wave, informing me that she did, in fact, know I was there. As I looked harder at her, I noticed that the rock wall along that ledge was darkened by several shadowy areas that might have been entrances to tunnels - leading anywhere.

Those shadows seemed to be moving! Something was emerging from one of those presumed tunnel entrances. I saw some shapes, still unidentifiable, and heard some low growls that sounded somewhat familiar, like something I had heard in the wild or at the zoo.

I saw Lynn turn. And she screamed.

Lumbering out of those dark places were a group - I still could not discern how many - of the largest bears I had ever seen or imagined. Cave bears, I thought, the "gods" of the Neandertals, the Frankenstein Monster notwithstanding, each one of them making the largest of grizzly bears appear to be a midgelet.

The bears moved sluggishly in Lynn's direction. One of them reared up on two legs, its muscular forearms striking rock. I could see now that there were five of these enormous mammals - five deadly, brown-furred animals ready to bury their hook-like claws into the woman's flesh.

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

There was no need for me to rush upon the cave bears with my spear or Bowie knife. Tor had already noticed what was happening and was moving rapidly toward the quintet of mammals. As long as the King of Beasts was present to protect its miniature prize, no animals, not even these formidable survivors of the Ice Age, would bring Lynn harm.

Lynn jumped to one side as Tor, roaring in angry challenge, sprang to a wider area just below the narrow ledge of rock where the cave bears had gathered. Moments later, the entire volcanic crater echoed with the roars of the ancient mammals, as the giant gorilla ripped into its five natural enemies. In size and cunning, Tor outranked the bears. Yet there were five bears and only one Tor, which somewhat evened the odds in their primal battle.

Tor growled in both pain and anger as

the cave bears fought back, biting and clawing its colossal body from all sides. Scarlet appeared on hairy torsos and limbs as the six monsters battled. Fangs flashed, reflecting the light cast upwards from the bubbling volcanic core.

Confusion was now my ally, and one of which I would take immediate advantage.

Without hesitating, I made my way along the rocks and toward Lynn. She was still standing only yards away from the fighting animals. If their struggle brought their massive bodies much closer to her, she would surely either be crushed against the rock wall or fall victim to a misdirected claw or fang. Breathing heavily, her full breasts rising and falling as she watched the battle, Lynn pressed her back against the rock as snugly as was possible.

Precariously I made it to a lower ledge and looked up at Lynn.

"Come on, honey!" I shouted over the roars of Tor and its adversaries. "We're getting out of this Hell!"

Holding on my hand as I hastened toward her, I finally made contact with her own. With a firm tug, I guided her down to the lower and safer level where I was standing.

"The Monster?" she asked, her eyes showing her concern for the brute.

"Don't worry about the Monster now," I said. "Just think about escaping this place."

Looking up toward the crater rim, I knew that climbing back to freedom would require time. Besides that, if Tor finished off the cave bears before Lynn and I reached the rim, we would be easily spotted in our ascent by the giant ape. Perhaps there was a quicker and safer way out. No other cave bears had emerged from the tunnel opening. I reasoned that, if the tunnel did harbor any additional bears, they would have, by now, emerged to join their kin in their fight with Tor.

"In there!" I yelled over the roars, pointing toward the tunnel.

Holding hands, Lynn and I plunged into the darkness of the connecting chamber. My heart raced as we ran, wondering if I might have been wrong about the cave bears, that there might be more of them sleeping in this shadowy place. And if we awakened them...

My decision to take this route proved to be the correct one. Apparently all of the cave bears occupying this passageway were in the crater, pitting their might and ferocity against that enormous ape. Lynn and I stumbled our way through the darkness in a frantic effort to reach the outside. Our hands felt the walls,

guiding us through the winding tunnel. Sometimes our bare feet stumbled over what felt to me like bones. We pressed onward, the sounds of battle still reverberating behind us.

At last a circle of light appeared ahead of us, almost blinding us in its intensity.

Daylight!

We had reached our destination.

"I think you'll know where we are once we get out of this place," I told Lynn. "I want you to run back to Marvin's plane and wait for me. I'll meet you there. I won't be long."

We ran out into the daylight, stopping on the rocky slope.

"Why must I go ahead?" Lynn asked me. "What are you planning to do?"

"As soon as Tor finishes off those bears, it's going to realize that you are gone...and come out looking for you. And it's going to be angry. Our only chance of surviving this ordeal is by making sure, once and for all, that Tor cannot come after us. That's why I have to stay here a little longer."

"What are you going to do?" she asked me, a tear appearing in one eye.

"I'm going to destroy Tor. Now go – get back to that plane!"

Lynn hesitated for a moment, then placed her arms around me and pressed herself against me, letting me feel the contours of her body. She kissed me, as passionately as she ever had even in our most intimate moments, and then stepped aside. "Hurry back," she said.

Then, her long hair trailing behind her, she bounded down the slope of the volcano in the direction of the Professor's airplane.

"Lynn's all right!" I shouted as I emerged on the slope on the other side of the volcano.

The Frankenstein Monster was standing where I had left it. A torch, stuck into the rocks, was burning almost to its end. Only one unlit torch remained. It was clear that, during my absence, the giant had mustered the courage to light two of the torches. I shuddered at the prospect of the Monster overcoming its fear of fire altogether, thereby eliminating one of the most potent weapons with which to oppose the being. From the look now on the Monster's face, however, I knew that that moment had not yet come.

"She is...safe?" the Monster asked, stepping toward me, its high boots slipping precariously. "Then...where is she?"

"I sent her back to the plane," I said. "It's too dangerous for her here, given what

we're about to do."

The Monster thought about what I said for a few moments then, apparently believing me, nodded.

Yanking the last unlit shaft from the rock, I brought it to the dying fire of the fifth and set it ablaze.

From inside the volcano, we heard Tor vent its rage, louder than ever. I surmised that, if the ape's fight with the cave bears had not yet reached its climax, it soon would. Once that moment arrived, the monster would realize that Lynn was gone and would come looking for her, madder and more dangerous than ever.

As I predicted, I saw something begin to emerge from the volcano's cone, a huge hairy hand reaching out over the smoking rim, a gigantic gorilla hand glistening in the sunlight with wet blood.

"It must be now!" I said to the Frankenstein Monster.

As the Monster spoke, I heard a faint crackling noise sounding vaguely electrical. Looking up, I perceived what seemed to be some kind of cloud literally taking form in the sky. Suddenly my body experienced a tinge of power, albeit of low energy, but something akin to that weird force that had washed through our Lear Jet the day Lynn and I were forced down onto this lost world.

There was no time to worry about the significance of that "cloud," or whatever it was growing and hovering high overhead. Putting my plan into operation now was my only real concern. I looked down at the makeshift fuse attached to the explosives drum. Would there be enough explosive material in that container, I asked myself in those final moments, to accomplish this job?

Again my mind raced with calculations, visions of angles, images of how the water would flow once the explosives were ignited. Making a last-moment adjustment of the explosives drum, I brought the last torch to the end of my fuse. I lit the fuse, the fire already rapidly eating its way toward the sealed container.

Another thought came to me in that moment.

The Monster!

Would the explosion finally bring an end to its artificial life, the lava sufficiently melting down its body so that future dissection would not be necessary? If I abandoned the brute in this lost world, would I really be ridding the Earth of its evil?

Without a word, I turned and made my way down the slope, leaving the man-made

creature behind me.

"Winslow!" the Monster snarled, and then started down the slope after me, its awkward gait and clumsy boots making the brute's descent difficult. "Winslow! You will not...abandon me!"

Still running, I glanced back to see the Frankenstein Monster making its crude attempts to catch up with me. But the faster the Monster moved, the more difficult following me became. I saw the brute stumble, then regain its footing, and then stumble yet again. If I could just keep up my own pace, while the Monster continued its present course, I might just be able to doom the giant slung with Tor.

"Winslow!" the Monster shrieked at me. "You will not...escape this place! You will stay here...with me!"

Looking toward the crater as I ran, I saw something else emerging. Not another hand, but Tor's massive head, the dark fur streaked with blood, a fiery rage in its eyes. The ape pulled itself to the top of the rim, looked around - probably for its lost, golden-haired prize - then bellowed. Lynn was already beyond the gorilla's grasp, out of its range of vision.

Then Tor looked at me. The ape roared and thumped its chest. It knew, in some primitive way, that I was responsible for the woman's disappearance.

Again the Frankenstein Monster called out to me. I saw the creature stumble again along the rocks, this time falling to its knees and then rolling along the slope.

I knew that the fuse must soon be at its end. If it were to ignite the contents of that drum and send the stream waters coursing into the volcano's core, it had to be within the next few moments. Anytime after that and Tor might be safely away from the volcano, far enough to evade the flow of lava.

My heart racing, I heard from behind me the deafening blast. Saw the side of the volcano explode in a shower of rock and dust amid a red and orange ball of fire. Mr. Abu had chosen well his weapons of terror. But the explosives seemed to be doing more, something I could not, even with my scientist's mind, understand. The very wall of the volcano was glowing unnaturally, crackling with strange energies as the rock was blown away, literally disintegrating rather than just being blown to stony shards.

In that moment I remembered that cloud-like form that I had seen taking shape outside the volcano just before I had lit the fuse. And the thought came to me. Was my very

presence in this lost world and my utilization of those potent yet anachronistic explosives doing more than just blowing up the side of this volcano? Had I, in fact, actually done far more damage this day? Had I and my act of "modern day" destruction somehow upset the strange temporal and environmental balance that had preserved and maintained this mixed-up world of prehistoric creatures that, in the outside world, had long gone extinct and, in so many cases, never coexisted?

I would ponder these confusing possibilities later.

Right now, the explosives were accomplishing their intended task - mine, not Abu's - only too well, splashing a shower of river water into the gaping hole now leading inside the volcano. Almost immediately the water began to accomplish its own work. I could feel the very slope of the mountain tremble and could envision the water creating the steam that would lead directly to an eruption.

I saw Tor, still atop the volcano's rim, reacting to the shaking occurring around him, natural forces that were even beyond the giant ape's own size and might. Something resembling a look of horror appeared on the beast's face as it looked down, beholding the awesome rumbling occurring way below him. Tor clung to the rim with all four appendages as its stony palace began to belch fire and smoke and molten matter.

My plan was working with near perfection. The volcano was in the process of erupting in full force.

As I reached the bottom of the slope, I turned again, hoping to see the Frankenstein Monster trapped somewhere and ready to receive its final demise. But the giant was not where I had seen it last. Where it had gone, I could not even guess.

What I did see was a stream of molten lava beginning to roll from the rim and down the slope, splashing with scalding effect as it cascaded on its way, rippling along stony crannies, finally setting fire to vegetation growing near the base of the volcano.

And I saw the mighty ape, helplessly perched atop the rim of its erstwhile domain, roaring as much from fear and pain as defiance and rage. Again the volcano shook and, as Tor sprang off the rim and onto the slope, the cone erupted fully, molten matter and smoke shooting high into the sky. Running down the slope haphazardly, apparently more interested in basic survival than either catching me or retrieving the woman, Tor almost reached the bottom of the slope when the lava engulfed its feet. The

pain unbearable, the gorilla yelled hideously as he sunk deeper into the searing muck. His roars reached a terrible crescendo as the monster's knees buckled and its hairy bulk sank deeper into the lava.

More lava rolled down the slope, engulfing the simian, consuming its body.

I saw the ape's chest, then shoulders and finally its following face, vanish beneath the boiling matter.

My lungs filling with air polluted by floating volcanic ash, I breathed with relief.

Tor, King of Beasts, no longer existed.

The ground shook as I ran. Somehow, the unknown forces I had inadvertently unleashed by that initial eruption were causing some kind of "chain reaction" of natural disasters that should not, under more "normal" circumstances, be happening. The ground, in various places, shook and split apart, creating jagged fissures. An earthquake had now joined the eruption and the fires, started mainly by the flowing lava, were spreading quickly. I saw a second volcano blow and then a third, their eruptions possibly associated in some way with my artificially inducing the first.

Overhead, I saw more of those energy-cracking clouds, like the one that had formed above the volcano's slope, some of them larger.

Thus, as I continued on my way, I could not help but continue to wonder if, somehow, by instigating that first eruption, I had indeed disrupted the "time flow" of this lost world. I considered the possibility that it was not yet the volcano's "time" to erupt, just as it was not the "time" for the many animals inhabiting this plateau to go extinct. Had my interfering with the temporal flow of this prehistoric realm set off this natural chain reaction? If so, what might be the further consequences of my action? The entire concept was quickly becoming more a philosophical than scientific one. But frankly, right now it hardly mattered. The only thing of real importance was reaching Lynn and the Professor.

At last I could see the Tiger Moth. But as I bolted toward it, the ground shaking around me, I heard from behind -

"Winslow!"

Frankenstein's Monster, moving swiftly but with difficulty, was in pursuit of me. There was still a chance to escape the brute and abandon him here, if I could just reach that place in time.

Lynn and Professor Sara were standing



beside the biplane, he wearing a leather aviator's cap and goggles, circa World War One.

"Lynn!" I yelled at the top of my lungs. "Marvin!"

Both turned, saw me coming toward them.

"We've got to get away from here now!" I exclaimed. "The Frankenstein Monster is on my tail and I fear this whole place is going to blow apart at any moment!"

The ground shook again and began to split apart, separating me from the biplane. Balancing myself at the new fissure's edge, I leaped over the fissure and made contact with the metal hull of the ancient aircraft. Marvin briefly shook my hand, then Lynn hugged me.

"This ol' airplane hasn't been started in a long time," said Marvin. "Climb aboard and start the engine, while I give the propeller a spin."

First I grabbed Lynn around her waist and gave her a boost into the front cockpit. Then I climbed into the rear cockpit. The aircraft's controls appeared simple enough.

I turned on the engine. It coughed a few times, as Marvin tugged down on one of the propeller blades.

Nothing happened.

Again the old man pulled down one of the blades, once more with no result. A third try, however, proved successful. The propeller spun around like an electric fan, making its much welcomed buzzing sound.

"Hurry up, Professor," said Lynn. "Climb aboard."

I saw Lynn look out off and react with a start. Turning, I beheld the Frankenstein Monster ambulating across the plain toward us.

Spotting another aviator's cap on the cockpit floor I slipped it on, pulling the goggles down over my eyes. The forces that had preserved the plane and kept its engines in functioning condition had also preserved the leather of these caps.

"It's almost over," I said to Lynn, praying that the plane would also get off the ground and then hold together long enough for us to reach some civilized place.

"I know," she said, "except for him."

The Monster was getting precariously close to the plane. Fortunately for us, the quaking ground and the fires were retarding its pursuit somewhat. There was still time for us to get away without the brute's direct interference.

Looking around, I could see the progressive destruction of our lost world, a

place that had remained untouched by time for millions of years but now was coming apart in just minutes. All around us were the sounds of eruption and geologic upheaval. The volcanoes continued to blast their molten debris into the sky. The distant plains were alive with giant animals fleeing for their lives as their world split and burned around them. Enormous reptiles slid into widening fissures. Herds of horned and tusked mammals perished, colliding with one another in a futile attempt to escape the fires growing about them. Lava flowed where, just moments before, rivers had been.

"Let's go," I told the Professor.

"Can you fly this ol' crate?" he asked me. "I never was much of a pilot and, frankly, most of what I did know about working these controls I've long forgotten."

Smiling and saluting the old paleontologist, I nodded confidently. The engine was smoking a bit, probably from a lack of good oil, but everything seemed to be hanging together well enough for a take-off.

As I took control of the plane, the aircraft jerked and rattled. But the propeller kept spinning. Indeed the biplane was making enough mechanical noise to rival even the erupting volcanoes.

"Come on, Professor!" I said, my attention on the controls. When I looked away again I could see why Marvin had still not boarded the plane.

Marvin was standing as though frozen, his eyes wide in terror, his mouth hanging open. Stalking toward him, its booted feet halting at the other side of the fissure, was the Frankenstein Monster. I could see the rage building in the Monster's face, ready to explode like one of those distant eruptions blasting their smoke into the heavens. Its cold eyes were fixed in a hateful glare upon the bearded paleontologist.

"You! Old man!" the Monster growled, making the words sound like curses. "You want to take... Winslow away... away from here... from me... in that!" It pointed stiffly in the direction of the brimming biplane.

"No, I..." started the Professor. "I only mean to save the girl!"

The Monster was already moving toward the old man. Its long legs reaching forward, the beast launched itself over the earth fissure, and then took a giant step toward Professor Sara.

"Professor, climb aboard," I said, "before..."

But Professor Sara was shaking too much to move, into the plane or anywhere

else. Reaching out, he grabbed his spear, which he had left resting against the side of the biplane, and held it up defensively against the Monster. I had never seen the paleontologist engage in any sort of physical combat and did not expect him to begin now. But, I surmised, he had to do something, make some attempt, feeble though it might be, to defend himself against this lumbering horror.

"You two are still young," Marvin said, his voice breaking up. "Take off while you still can - before the Monster turns on you."

"But Professor..." started Lynn.

"I've lived longer than any man has a right to live," he said. "Besides that, from what you tell me, I don't think I'd really adapt well to your ultra-modern world."

Deliberately, Marvin thrust his spear against the Monster's chest and neck, provoking the brute more than hurting it. It was obvious to me what the Professor was trying to do - keep the Monster's attention on him while Lynn and I took off for freedom. There was no stopping him or the Monster now. Marvin's spear had accomplished its mission and the Monster's temper enflamed.

The next instant, the creation of Frankenstein seized Marvin's spear, shoved it through his stomach and out his back, then dashed his bleeding body down into the fissure. There was nothing I or anyone else could do for our friend.

"Hang on, Lynn," I said, "we're out of here!"

I saw the Frankenstein Monster turn and lunge toward the biplane.

As the same time, I worked the controls of the Tiger Moth, felt the craft roll forward. The ground around us shook and shivered again as the Monster's grasping image retreated behind us. Shaking like the ground itself, the airplane jerked into the air.

Looking back as our biplane ascended, I saw the Frankenstein Monster struggling to maintain its balance as the ground continued to quake. Banking our craft, I swooped down for a closer look, just as another shaking of the earth sent the Monster toppling down into the deep crevice. Even at this height I could see the beast hanging by its yellow fingers from the edge of the opening in the ground, fighting yet to preserve his unnatural spark of life.

In the Monster's peril, I saw an unexpected opportunity. Our Tiger Moth was climbing into the mists that constantly hung over the lost world, vapors now combined with the pungent smoke still rising from the

volcanoes.

Leveling off the aircraft, I shouted at Lynn, "Move over! I'm coming up front!"

"What?" she returned over the sounds of the engines. "Are you crazy?"

"By now you should know the answer to that," I said, pulling myself out of the rear seat and climbing into the one up front, squeezing next to Lynn.

"What are you up to now?"

Smiling at her, I fingered the trigger buttons on the twin Vickers machineguns, then squeezed them back, releasing a trial burst of deadly ammunition into the air.

Then, taking the stick of the front set of controls, I maneuvered the biplane into a dive.

"What are you doing, Burt? Trying to get us both killed?"

We came down rapidly, the ground zooming up and filling our fields of vision. I could see the great reptiles – leftovers from the Mesozoic Era – still struggling to stay alive as their world literally cracked and burned and exploded around them. I saw rivers of lava and thundering avalanches bury giant mammals in their debris.

And somewhere down below us, still out of visual range, was the trapped Frankenstein Monster.

"I have to do this, Lynn," I shouted, "if for no other reason, for our friend Professor Sara!"

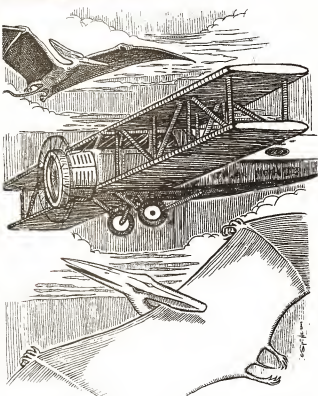
Flying lower, I could finally see the figure of the Frankenstein Monster, already pulling itself out of the fissure. But even as the creature stood again on solid ground, that very ground began to crack and split into a spreading mosaic.

I got the Monster in the machineguns' sights.

Although I knew that the Monster could not survive the upheavals occurring around it, I had a personal debt to pay the beast for all the misery it had caused me, my loved ones, friends and perfect strangers. Now was theoretically my last chance to pay back that debt. My last opportunity to purge myself of at least some of the guilt the Monster and its crimes had heaped upon me.

The biplane zoomed down for the kill.

My fingers began to ease back the trigger buttons of the machineguns. But even as we lost altitude and I prepared to enact my revenge against the Monster, the air around me was alive with reptilian life. I heard the shrieks and saw the bat-like wings of the flying animals as they buzzed around me.



"Pteranodon!" I exclaimed.

There was no recourse but to fight the giant pterosaurs. There were three of them, flapping and gliding around us, possibly mistaking the biplane for one of their own kind. If I were to have my vengeance upon the Monster, I would first have to deal with these airborne pests.

Above the flying reptiles another one of those energy clouds churned and crackled.

Only beginning to get the "feel" of the Tiger Moth and the way its lightweight body was tossed about in the wind, still managed to evade the pterosaurs' beaks and wings. My fingers worked the buttons of the Vickers guns, releasing rapid sprays of bullets. One of

the flying creatures was cut almost in half as my machinegun fire ripped into its body, sending the animal drifting earthward.

Another volley of gunfire blasted through another pterosaur, its blood spewing out in an arcing spray of red as the animal plummeted.

The last of the flock, apparently instinctively having enough of its fire-spitting brother of the sky, simply turned away, its furry body vanishing into a cloud of volcanic smoke.

"Now!" I said to Lynn, sighing.

Bringing down the plane to about fifty feet off the ground, I quickly spotted the Frankenstein Monster hurrying across the

plain. Banking again, I zeroed in on the creature for a frontal attack. As I flew near the beast, I saw the rage upon its face.

From the corner of my eye, I noticed that the energy cloud was also descending from the sky, hovering several hundred feet above the Monster's head.

Both Vickers machineguns fired, strafing the Monster's body with such force that the creature toppled off its feet. I saw its blood flow as I pulled back the stick, arcing the biplane into the air at an almost ninety-degree angle. Then I leveled the ship off.

Looking down, I saw the Monster, its body splattered with blood, stagger about. Wounded severely, yes, but alive. I began to bring the plane down again.

Lynn grabbed my wrist. "Why are we going back?" she said with emotion. "Haven't you done enough to him. With all those bullets..."

"They won't kill the Monster," I said. "In time they'll heal. But I'm not trying to kill the beast with these bullets. I have something else in mind for it."

Cruising along, I could see that the Monster was shambling about in the vicinity of a widening earth fissure into which was pouring a steady stream of molten lava. In that moment, the symbolism was perfect - Hell opening up to claim one of its own.

Zooming down again, I buzzed the Monster. Weak from the myriad machinegun bullets, it offered no resistance as I forced it to move about, closer and closer to that lava-filled opening in the ground. Again and again I made the plane rise and dip, while the Monster, to avoid being struck down by the aircraft, continued to stumble toward the waiting fissure.

At last the Monster's heels were but inches away from that gaping hole. Swooping down for one final pass, I fired again my twin machineguns, their force cutting through the giant's body sending the fiend falling backwards into the lava. At the same time, just as the Monster began to plunge backwards into the lava, I saw that inexplicable energy cloud drift down close to its plummeting hulk, enveloping it, totally smothering it in a dense field of crackling power.

To avoid a crash, I brought the Tiger Moth up into a dark blanket of volcanic smoke.

Looking down, I saw a great erupting of power from the fissure into which both the Monster had fallen and the lava had flown. I hoped to see the Monster's corpse melting



away in the heat of the lava. But we were already too far away. The crevice and all it contained were beyond our visual range.

Then Lynn and I saw the last of our lost world, splitting apart and crumbling away in one final cataclysm, and passing into the realm of legend. More energy clouds were appearing in the sky, brooding and shooting out their energies. If we could avoid those, we might still have a chance of flying to freedom.

However, our primitive aircraft was not fast enough. Even as we soared higher and finally escaped that prehistoric world, our biplane was enveloped by one of the clouds and seized by its potent forces - the same

ones that had apparently brought us here originally.

In that instant, no longer protected by the sturdy hull of a Lear Jet, Lynn and I were quite certain that, after all we had been through, we were finally about to die.

Strangely, just as we survived our initial encounter with those unknown forces, we survived - though shaken up terribly - once again.

For almost an hour, after those forces left us, we flew on a more or less steady course. The old compass on the plane said

that we were flying on a northerly course, a direction confirmed by the position of the sun. Wherever we were, there were no signs of earthquakes or volcanic eruptions or dog-fighting pterosaurs.

"Any idea where we are?" asked Lynn. "Or even when?"

I shook my head. Actually, even though I had no idea yet as to where we were, we were away from the terrors of our lost world. Behind us now was all of it – the dinosaurs, the Neanderthals, Tor, King of Beasts, and also the Frankenstein Monster.

"What about the Monster? Is he really dead?" she asked, genuinely concerned.

"I know it's cheated death before," I said, "but even the Frankenstein Monster will have to be especially resourceful to survive a pit of molten lava, not to mention whatever energies assaulted it from that weird cloud."

Hearing a kind of choking sound from the biplane, I surmised that either we were running out of fuel, possibly traveling farther than expected during our encounter with those unknown forces, or that our modern fuel was not entirely compatible with the Tiger Moth's archaic engines. Whatever the reason for the noises, it was best that we land.

As I brought our rickety craft closer to the ground, I could see houses suggesting a small town. I wondered what the residents down there would say to an aircraft from the first World War, piloted by a bearded caveman wearing an aviator's cap and goggles, accompanied by a near-naked jungle goddess.

Descending, I looked into the blue eyes of the woman nestled closely next to me in the biplane's front seat and I smiled. Then a melancholy sensation overcame me as I remembered the heroic pilot of our Lear Jet. And the loyalty of a Neanderthal woman named Moxe. And the heroism of that grand old man, Professor Marvin Sara, whose detention of the Frankenstein Monster allowed Lynn and me to escape from that plateau, a sacrifice that allowed two friends to live.

As I brought the Tiger Moth back to solid ground, I smiled again, this time confident that the Frankenstein Monster had been destroyed for all time. Nothing that lived, not even a creature possessing the gift of eternal life, could have survived Mother Nature at her most destructive worst.

I shut off the engine and the biplane's propeller stopped.

We were about two hundred feet away from a small house on what appeared to be a



small African firm. Almost from the moment we landed, the occupants of that house – a man, a woman and a little girl – were outside and rushing towards our plane.

Then I looked at Lynn and chuckled.

"I'm sorry," she said, a perplexed look on her lovely face, "but I don't get the joke."

"Nothing really, my darling," I said. "But it just occurred to me."

"What?"

"Have we become so accustomed to living the primitive life style that we don't even care how we're dressed...or undressed?"

It took Lynn a moment or two to understand my meaning. Then, with a start, she looked down at herself, naked from the

waist up, her long legs entirely bare, her only clothing being the same skimpy loincloth she had worn since her capture by the Neanderthals.

"Oops!" she said, covering up her breasts with her long hair. "I forgot."

Leaping from the plane, I greeted the people and apologized for trespassing on their property. Then I looked back at Lynn and smiled again at her.

"Now what?" she asked.

Gazing into her eyes, I said, "Oh, I was just thinking about how wonderful it's going to be from now on, me, Bert Winslow, the 'Jungle Lord,' married to Lynn Powell, my 'Queen of the Jungle.'"

# BONUS FRANKENSTEIN FEATURE!

MONSTER OF AUG.-SEPT. 1954 No. 32

# FRANKENSTEIN

*THE MOST FAMOUS  
MONSTER EVER CONCEIVED*

10¢

BEGIN AN ADVENTURE WITH THE FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER AS HE IS HURLED INTO A HUNGRY SEA IN A TROPICAL STORM ...

FOLLOW HIM AS HE BATTLES HIS ENEMIES, HUMAN AND ANIMAL IN A STRANGE AND PRIMITIVE LAND OF MYSTERY AND INTRIGUE...

SEE THE GREAT CLIMAX AS HE MEETS A MORE POWERFUL FOE IN NATURE-- THE ERUPTING, BLASTING, SEETHING VOLCANO!



This vintage THE MONSTER OF FRANKENSTEIN comic book story courtesy of the Gothic Collection from No. 32 Art and Story by Dick Brierley

The MONSTER OF

# FRANKENSTEIN

The  
BATTLE  
OF THE  
MONSTERS!



SOMEWHERE ON THE HIGH SEAS, A SHIP IS BEING  
TOSSED AND BUFFETED BY THE ANGST-CHANGING  
WAVES OF A TYPICAL STORM...



AND IN THE HOLD, UNKNOWN TO THE CREW, IS  
A STEWART--THE FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER,  
WHO TOOK REFUGE ON THE SHIP WHILE IT WAS  
IN DOCK.



THE ROBBING AND ROLLING OF THE SHIP IS ANNOY-  
ING TO THE MONSTER, BUTLY THERE ARE BETTER  
PLACES TO HIDE. HE LEAVES THE HOLD TO SEE  
WHAT CAN BE DONE...



THE STEERSMAN ON DUTY HAS  
ENOUGH TO DO AS IS--BUT  
THEN THROUGH THE RAIN AND  
DARKNESS HE SPOTS THE LULY  
MONSTER...



THE STEERSMAN REPORTS  
TO HIS PISTOL, TO NO HIM-  
SELF OF THE THREAT OF  
THE GIANT...



AND ON DECK HE IS CONFRONTED WITH THE  
TUMULTUOUS SEA AND CRASHING WAVES...



HE COULDN'T HAVE MISSED AS JO-  
CLOSE A RANGE--YET THE BULLET  
HAD NO EFFECT. INSULTED THE  
MONSTER ADVANCES UPON THE  
HARRAID STEERSMAN...



BUT THE WIND AND SEA COME BETWEEN THEM  
BEFORE THEY CAN MEET...



AND WHEN THE FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER  
COMES UP FOR AIR, NO LONGER IS THERE A  
SHIP UNDER HIS FEET. ONLY BOTTOMLESS  
DEPTH AND SHALLOWS WAVES...



BUT AS ALWAYS, THE STORM SURFIDES... AND WHEN THE HOP RICHMOND BOAT COMES ON...



...THERE IS THE CALM... THE HARM TROPICAL WATERS... AND LAND CLOSER BY?



BUT AS THE MONSTER VIEWS THE WELCOME, BOLD LAND, OTHER EYES LOCK OUT AND STUDY THE THING APPROACHING IN THE WATER!



THE TIDE IS OUT---THERE IS A LONG DISTANCE FOR THE FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER TO WALK BEFORE HE REACHES THE DRY SHORE...



WHAT IS IT, ON KNOWER-OF-ALL? IS THIS THE EVIL DESTROYER YOU HAVE BARRIED US ABOUT?



LET ME SEE, YES, YES, IT IS THE EVIL VISITOR I HAVE PREDICTED WOULD COME TO DESTROY US ALL.

HONEST KNOWER-OF-ALL HAS SHOWN NOW THAT YOUR LEADER... SPEAK! ATTACK HIM BEFORE HE CAN CAST HIS EVIL! KILL HIM!



AND AS THE GIANT BE-LOMS THE SHORE, THE ISLANDERS ATTACK WITH THEIR SPEARS!



THE ISLANDERS SEE A SPEAR SHIN INTO THE MONSTER'S BODY, BUT SO THIN AND THEY SEE HIM FULL IT RIGHT CUT, DANGERHO!



THERE IS NOTHING FOR THE RUE-VIN TO DO, BUT FLEE THIS EVIL THING FROM THE SEA.



AND THE MONSTER IS LEFT ALONE... ON A STRANGE LAND, WITH ENEMES TO FACE...



...AND WITH A SUDDEN CHARGE THE GIANT RUSHES INTO THE MIST OF HIS ATTACKERS!



THE LEADER OF THE ISLANDERS AND HIS ADVISOR PLAN THEIR NEXT MOVE.



I WILL ORDER EVERY MAN IN THE LAND TO SUBMIT AND KILL HIM!

NO--THAT IS NOT THE WAY, WE MUST MAKE PEACE WITH HIM... TELL HIM HE HAS COME TO SAVE US FROM EVIL AND DESTRUCTION.

TELL HIM THAT HE HAS BEEN SENT TO US FROM THE SEA TO HELP US, AND THAT OUR FUTURE ATTACK UPON HIM AT THE BEACH WAS BECAUSE HE IS THE ONE TO HELP US PROSPER. A PEACE FOR HIM AT THE TEMPLE... WE MUST MAKE HIM FEEL WE COME THEN HE WILL FIND A WAY TO HELP US OF HIM!



THE RICHMOND WARRIORS... BOLD, AND FINALLY COMES TO THE ISLAND, TOWARD...



MAJOR: THE MONSTER ENTERS THE GREAT HALL AT THE  
PRIDE OF THE PEOPLE. THERE, HE IS THUNDER FOR ANY AND  
OF BATTLE, BUT THEY MAKE NO MOVE TO ATTACK.

OH, GREAT SAYER-OF-LIFE, BECOME  
WE HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU.



FOOD, REST AND ENTERTAINMENT  
FOR YOU! HE KNOWS YOU ARE THE  
ONE SENT TO US TO SAVE US  
FROM HELL BECAUSE HE  
GAVE YOU THE TEST.



THE FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER ATTACKS -  
A BULL ON THE BEAST'S POWERFUL TAIL PUTS  
HIM IN POSITION TO BE INVENTED.



PUNISHED DOWN THE CROCODILES FIERCE  
MOUTH IS NOW OPEN IN THE MONSTER  
HIDE - HIDER...



SPREADS HAD NO EFFECT UPON  
YOU AT THE BRANCH - YOU ARE  
ALL POWERS - LOOK UPON  
US AS SERVANTS - AND  
DELIVER US FROM THOSE  
WHO THREATEN US!



THE MONSTER RELAXES...  
THESE HUMBLE, SOFT-  
SPOKEN PEOPLE WHO FEED  
HIM SEEM TO BE HIS  
FRIENDS, NOT ENEMIES...



OUR ENEMIES ARE IN MANY  
SHAPES. ONE OF OUR MOST  
POWERFUL ENEMIES IS A  
CROCODILE. HE IS THE  
FIRST THAT MUST BE KILLED.



AND WITH A COMBINED PULL AND THIST, THE  
BEASTS' JAW AND NECK BOTH SNAP -  
THE BATTLE IS OVER!



...AND THE MEN STAND WITH GATING MOUTHS  
AND BULGING EYES TO SEE WITH US!  
BASE THE GIANT OVERCAME THE CROCODILE!



HE IS MORE DANGEROUS  
THAN WE IMAGINED!  
WHAT CAN WE DO  
NEXT TO DESTROY  
HIM?

POND, THE  
LION! POND'S  
TEETH AND  
CLAWS WILL  
PUT AN END TO  
HIM!

THE LEADER, THE KNOWER OF ALL THE MONSTER  
AND SOME OTHER UNLACIES GO TO SEARCH  
OUT NOW, THE CROCODILE.



THIS IS WHERE WE SET  
RID OF THIS EVIL GIANT.  
NOW WILL PUT HIM END  
TO HIM QUICKLY.

SUBBLY THERE BEFORE THEM IS A



GREAT DOGS OF DOOD, ONE  
FORWARDLY ENEMY OF  
OURS IS GONE. YOU HAVE  
OUR UNDOING, GENTLEMEN -  
YET - THERE IS STILL  
ANOTHER, TREACHEROUS  
HARLAUD...



COME - HE WILL LEAD  
THE WAY TO HIM - HE  
KILLS US, AND ALL  
OUR EFFORTS TO  
DESTROY HIM HAVE  
FAILED!



THERE! POND, THE LION!





BUT EVEN THE FURIOUS LION PROVES NO MATCH FOR THE SUPER-POWERFUL MONSTER!



ONCE AGAIN THE MEN ARE AGAINST THE POWER OF THIS EVIL THING THAT DESTROYED THEM. THERE IS NOTHING TO DO BUT FIGHT HIM AS A FURIOUS MAN FIGHT THE NEXT METHOD OF DESTRUCTION.



WHAT ARE WE TO DO WITH HIM, KNOWER-OF-ALL? THERE IS NO GREAT LUCKY... HE BELIEVES HE AND HIS FRIENDS, TONIGHT I WILL MAKE A VISION OF HOW TO DESTROY HIM!

NEXT DAY, UNLOCKED THE MONSTER INVESTIGATES THE LAND.



AT THE FOOT OF THE MOUNTAIN, HE PAUSES, FOR HE HEARS A CRY.



HELP

HE STARTS UP THE SLOPE TO SEE WHAT IS ON TOP.



AND THERE, AT THE TOP, ARE TWO CHAINED PRISONERS!



IF YOU ARE GOING TO KILL US, SO IF WHY IT'S BETTER THAN BEING CHAINED IN THE SCROLLING SUN WAITING FOR THIS VOLCANO TO BLOW ITS TOP!



THE EVIL ONE ON LEADER, HE HAS COME TO THE TOP OF THE FIRE-HILL!



IF WE DO THIS RIGHT, WE CAN ATTACK AND KISS HIM DOWN INTO THE CRATER!



AFTER OUR BOAT WAS SWICKED, WE DROPTED ON THE SPA IN OUR LIFE BOAT THEN WE CAME TO THIS LAND SINCE THEN WE HAVE BEEN HELD CAPTIVE, AND THEY INTEND TO SACRIFICE US TO THIS VOLCANO...



LOOK! HERE THEY COME! GET US OUT OF THESE CHAINS... AT LEAST WE MIGHT AS WELL BE FIGHTING FOR OUR FREEDOM!



FOR A MOMENT THE MONSTER HESITATES, THEN HE LAUNCHES HIMSELF BACK TO THE WAY THE ISLANDERS ATTACKED HIM. ON THE BEACH, AND HE WONDERES WHY THEY COULDN'T KILL THE CHOCOLATE AND THE LION, INSTEAD OF SENDING HIM IN TO BATTLE THEM... AND HE DECIDES TO TAKE A CHANCE ON THESE TWO PRISONERS...



DOWN! DOWN THIS SIDE OF THE VOLCANO! OUR BOAT MIGHT STILL BE WHERE WE LEFT IT.



CAREFULLY WITH AS MUCH SPEED AS THEY CAN, THE THREE RANSE THEIR WAY DOWN THE HILL, FOLLOWED BY THE SKEANS OF THE ISLANDERS FROM THE TOP...



SUDDENLY THERE IS A DEAFENING ROAR, AND THE SEASIDE BEGINS TO RUMBLE. THE MONSTER AND THE TWO ARMED BOATMEN, BUT NOTED, THERE IS A SHOWER OF FLAMES!



FOR THE VOLCANO HAS ERUPTED WITH THE LEADERS, AND SOME OF HIS MEN RIGHT AT THE TOP!



THE BOAT! THERE IT IS -- JUST WHERE WE LEFT IT! GET IN -- WE CAN'T STAY ON THIS LAND!



THE SEA, MADE VIOLENT BY THE ERUPTING VOLCANO, AND THE SHOWER OF ASHES THREATEN THE LIVES OF THE TWO REFUGEES...



WITH POWERFUL STROKES, THE MONSTER SUCCEEDS IN PUTTING DISTANCE BETWEEN THEM AND THE RIFTY LAND...



BUT THEIR PAST EXPERIENCE, AND THE EXPOSURE TO THE COLD NIGHT AND HOT SUN ME TOO MUCH FOR THE MAN AND WOMAN...



...AND THE MONSTER WATCHES OVER THE TWO UNCONSCIOUS FORMS...



FOR TWO DAYS THE LITTLE BOAT FLOATS ON THE SEA. THERE IS NO LIFE AROUND--THERE IS NO PLACE TO RUN TO...



AND THEN A DAW-BLOUD SLOWLY RECOGNIZES VOLCANO, BECAUSE THE MONSTER TAKES IT IS A NAME--CROAKS AND FROM FEAR!



LOOKING UP, THE SHARK KNOWS THAT TO THE TWO PEOPLE IN THE BOAT THE PLANE MEANS SAFETY AND LIFE... BUT TO HIM, IT MEANS HE WILL BE FOUND AND HUNTED AND TORTURED AGAIN...



QUETLY, THE MONSTER SLIPS OUT OF THE BOAT, AND AS THE PLANE LANDS UPON THE WATER, HE SURVEILLES HIMSELF SO THEY WOULDN'T SEE HIM.



THE SURVIVORS ARE RESCUED, THEY ARE TAKEN AWAY FROM THE PLANE, AND THEIR LITTLE LIFEBOAT IS LEFT TO THE MERCY OF THE SEA...



...AND ONLY WHEN THE PLANE SOARS OFF AND THE SHIP DOES THE REUSKINGSTEIN MONSTER LIFT HIS HEAD ABOVE WATER. THEY ARE GONE NOW--THE BOAT IS HIS...



AND ONCE AGAIN HE IS ALONE ON AN ENDLESS SEA, AT LEAST HE IS NOT FLAGGED BY HIS ENEMY. MAN, BUT WHEREVER HE GOES HE IS SURE TO MEET WITH VIOLENCE AND RESISTANCE, FOR MAN IS OUT TO DESTROY HIM!



THE END



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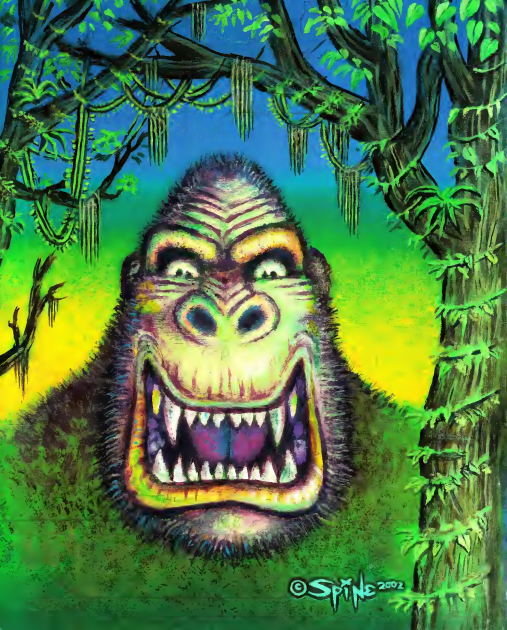
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